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PREFACE

This Bulletin closely follows the principle of devoting greater attention to Tamiḻ Traditions and Tamiḻ Culture and, at the same time, emphasising the bonds of the traditional cultures of the other regions of South and South East Asia.

In view of the large number of articles from scholars and the length of the proceedings of the Seminars, some sections like 'Institutions, Scholars and Artists' had to be omitted. As in the previous issues, the authors were left free to use such diacritical marks as were adopted in the earlier issues of the Bulletins, in view of the separate systems of transliteration in languages like Tamiḻ and Sanskrit.

The Institute is grateful to all scholars who have contributed a variety of articles on Culture and Tradition which appear in this issue. Some valuable articles are held over on account of want of space, for publication in the next issue.

The Government of Tamiḻ Nāḍu and the Government of India have kindly continued the financing of the Institute and its activities. The University of Madras continues to accommodate the Institute in its building, providing it with the concomitant amenities and the full and hearty co-operation of all its Departments in the activities of the Institute. It also bears the cost of paper and printing of the issues of this Bulletin. The Institute is grateful for all this valuable help, which has enabled it to continue to function and carry on its activities.

The Institute is glad that during this year the following dignitaries have been appointed as Members of the Governing Body of the Institute:

1. Ambassador and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia, New Delhi. (*Ex-Officio*)

2. Consul-General of the Republic of Philippines, Madras. *(Ex-Officio)*
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6. Smt. Rukmini Devi, Director, Kalākshētra, Madras.
7. Thiru M. Arunachalam, Director, Tamil, Sanskrit and other Indian Languages Research Institute, Madras.

The Executive Committee has also given valuable assistance in running this Institute. Due to the increased costs of printing and paper, a cut in the distribution of copies of the Bulletin has become unavoidable.

MADRAS,
11th November 1976.

K. K. PILLAY,
Director.

CONTENTS

Pages

Preface iii

ARTICLES

A leaf from the History of Saivism in Tamil Nadu in the 16th Century 1

—Thiru M. Arunachalam

Mahendravarman's Paradoxical Birudas 11

—Dr. Michael Lockwood

Comparison of Medieval and Modern Hindu Interpretation of Chandogya Upanisad 17

—Thiru Arvind Sharma

Tradition, Social Structure and Social Reform 23

—Thiru D. Sundaram

Kurinchi-k-Kadavul 29

Thiru A. R. Muthian

A note on Kudimiyamalai Music Inscription 55

—Thiru K. K. Ramamurthy

Social Life of Gypsies of Tamil Nadu 59

—Thiru D. Palani

Ganapati in Panchadevopasana 65

—Thiru B. R. Sharma

Kalabhra Interregnam—A Retrospect and a Prospect 81

—Dr. B. G. L. Swamy

The Antiquity of the Institution of the Four Ashramas ... 149

—Thiru N. Gangadharan

REPORTS OF SEMINARS

Ballads in Tamil Nadu ... 161

Renewal and Preservation of Traditions in Dance ... 207

Traditional Hinduism and Social Development ... 227

BOOK REVIEW ... 279

ARTICLES

A LEAF FROM THE HISTORY OF SAIVISM IN TAMILNADU IN THE 16th CENTURY

BY

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The citzen of India in the remote past had been follower of the Vedas. Long before the term Hinduism was applied to the religion of the people of India, they had been following one religion. They believed in the existence of the souls, the existence of one God who controlled the destinies of all beings, in the cycle of births and deaths through which the souls had to pass in order to experience the fruits of their action or *karma*, and in a final emancipation of all souls at the proper time through the Grace of God. The religion which had these beliefs was called the *Vaidika* religion, the religion which owed its allegiance to the Veda. In a later day, people outside Bhārat began to call this religion Hinduism, just as they called the people themselves Hindus and the country India, that beyond the River Indus (the Sindhu).

Each individual was then considered to pass through four stages in his life. The first, the *Brahmachāri*, or the student who sat at the feet of the master and learnt all knowledge secular and spiritual. Next he took leave of the master, went home, married and settled down to the householder's life, following the avocation of his fore-fathers; he was now called a *Gṛhasta*. The third stage was the *Vānaprasta*, where the married couple, having had the full enjoyment of life, now lived a retired life of old age, not a life of inaction, but a life of service to the entire human family, not only to their immediate family. The last stage was the *Sannyāsi* one who renounced the world altogether and strove for

his own spiritual enlightenment and salvation. Among these four stages, the last one, the life of the *Sannyāsi*, was held in high esteem. The Sannyāsi had renounced not only all possessions, but also all kith and kin. He had renounced even his immediate family and considered all mankind as his family; and he strove also for the spiritual enlightenment of all mankind, as well as his own. The *Sannyāsi* had no home and no settled abode. He has been considered traditionally to live on the alms given to him by society and to move from place to place. The rule was that once a man entered the sacred orders of *Sannyāsa*, caste distinctions also ceased; the *Sannyāsi* was above caste. Householders of whatever station in life, were enjoined to show the greatest respect to the *Sannyāsi:* they should fall down, prostrate at the sight of the *Sannyāsi*, even as a staff drops down when released from the hold of the hand.

The Çoḷa administration in the Tamiḻnād from the 9th to the 13th centuries was a religion-oriented administration. All the Çoḷa monarchs were ardent followers of Śiva and under their rule the Śaiva religion thrived in the country as never before. Thousands of temples were built, rituals were elaborated, āgamic worship was installed in all the temples, Śivāchāryas were held in great reverence, and arrangements were made to sing the *Dēvāram* hymns in all the important temples, with liberal endowments. Yet the Çoḷas also gave munificent donations to the Vaiṣṇava temples, besides Jain and Buddha temples. But the last two ceased to be any positive religious or social force by the 13th century.

When the Çoḷa dynasty became extinct in the Kavēri delta by the end of the 13th century, and the Muslims captured the Pāṇḍināḍu at the beginning of the next century, the *vaidika* religion had a major threat. There was no royal support but there was an organised suppression of all religion, rituals, worship and social life by the alien rule. This state continued for a considerable period. This was a challenge to Hinduism, so to say, and there was awe and terror everywhere. Into this atmosphere of despair and frustration, the establishment of Vijayanagar as the supreme Hindu power brought a ray of hope and confidence and served

to dispel all the terror of the people and enabled them to face the challenge powerfully and successfully. Its deputies ruled over Madurai, Tiruchi and Tañjāvur in the South and they extended a protecting and helping hand to both the religions, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, for a considerably long period in the 15th and the 16th centuries. This helped to a great extent in the revival of the Hindu religion during the period.

The challenge to religion was however taken up directly by society itself. The very instability of political power made the Hindu society evolve its own religious heads in the 13-14 centuries. The *Advaita Vedānta* of Śaṅkara, which said, *aham brahma asmi*, I am God, had lulled the people particularly the Brahmin community into inaction. Hence the Cōḷa monarchs had earlier taken, not the Brahmins but the Śivacharyas, the worshippers of Śiva, as their spiritual preceptors. Śaṅkara Advaita had no positive or practical contribution to society or to the evolution of a religious renaissance in society during the dark period of the 14th and the 15th centuries. The challenge thrown out by political suppression was taken up by both Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism, which had evolved their own independent line of preceptors, who stemmed the tide of the invading spiritual darkness and held aloft the ancient banner of succour and refuge in the people's own religion evolved from their past. Religious heads had sprung up from the 12th century in both the religions and by their preachings and conduct they were able to afford solace and comfort to the people. They had also established spiritual centres for guiding seekers after spiritual knowledge and these came to be called monasteries and mutts in the later days. By their selfless service, dedication and surrender, and sympathy with the people, they were able to infuse faith and hope, courage and confidence in them. The heads were all *Sannyāsis* who had renounced every thing except love of God and love of man, and people flocked to them for guidance and leadership.

The mother tongue, as against Sanskrit, played and important role in the evolution of this leadership. The Śaiva Canon, namely the Dēvaram, Tiruvāçakam and the other books, and the Vaiṣṇava

canon, namely the Nālāyira Divya Prabandham, all in the Tamil language, were the scriptures that rallied the people who were smarting under oppression in religion, round the banner of the religious heads during this period.

During this period of great tumult and despondency, the 14-16th centuries, the *Advaita Sannyāsis*, the followers of Śaṅkara were all Brahmins; they swore only by Sanskrit. The course of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism during this period ran parallel. Vaisnava Sannyāsis were always Brahmins and their chief opponents were the Śaṅkara advaitins. Although they swore by the *Nālāyiram* which was Tamil Vēda for them, they thought, spoke and wrote in Sanskrit. Because they were also Brahmins, the Śaṅkara Advaitins had no quarrel with them on the social plane; their disputation was only on the spiritual plane.

The Śaivas of the period however stood on a different footing. The Śaiva population constituted the bulk of the entire community and it was predominantly not Brahmin. Its ācaryas or preceptors also were not Brahmins. Their spiritual centres were all founded by seers who were not Brahmins. This position seems to have caused a conflict on the social plane. A large number of mutts was founded in the 16th century. The Śaiva religious seers had written original Śaiva scriptures in the Tamil language. They had become immensely popular. Of course they were also followers of the Vēdas. Sometime after the Vēdas were written down, a new set of scriptures known as the Āgamas had come into existence from the remote past, probably in the middle of the first millennium B.C., and the Śaivas held that these had equal authority with the Vēdas in religious matters.

We may remember here a background story. During the days of Kulottuṅga Çoḷa III and of his son Rāja Rāja III (beginning of the 13th century) we find that the Śaiva monks and religious preceptors were dwelling in caves. Historians have held that a movement was directed by the northern Brahmins of the period towards attacking these cave dwellings and the ascetics dwelling there. These men were all Śaiva Sannyāsis and religious heads. It was felt that they had acquired great popularity and influence

among the people. However, the north Indian Brahmin Sannyāsis of the period, who had considerable pull with the government then, did not like the growing power of the Śaiva ascetics and so they organised a riot calculated to demolish the cave monasteries. It must be remembered that the Sannyāsi robe was very much in the picture. The Advaita Sannyāsis were saffron-clad. The Śaiva Sannyāsis also seem to have put on this robe. Those Brahmin Sannyāsis did not like this, and so the revolt. The revolt was however put down by royal intervention.

This intolerance again comes to the fore in the 16th century. Several influential monasteries had been established then in places like Kañchīpuram, Suryanārkoil, Tiru Āvaduturai, Dharmapuram and Tulavur. Only the Suryanārkoil, Tiru Āvaduturai and Dharmapuram had contributed to the social and spiritual life of the people of the day and had a hold over the people living in widely scattered areas. Now generally the preceptors or the heads of the monasteries were all *naiṣtika brahmachāris*. These Śaiva *Sannyāsis* did not wear the saffron robe at this period, but wore only the ordinary white cloth like the other lay people. The heads of the Tiru Āvaḍuturai and Dharmapuram mutts also were wearing at that time only the white dress. But yet they were as much Sannyāsis as the saffron-clad Sannyāsis.

It may be remembered that Kamalai Jñānaprakāśa, the *guru* of Guru Jñānasambandha, founder of the Dharmapuram mutt, was a householder, a family man; he wore naturally only the white dress. So his disciple, Guru Jñānasambandha also wore only white, although he assumed the life of a Sannyāsi. No one thought of a saffron robe. The *guru* of Śivāgra Yōgi was Śivakkoḻundu Dēśikar, not a Brahmin, but a Śaiva. His daughter was Svānanda nacciyār, for whose enlightenment Śivāgra Yōgi wrote his famous Tamiḻ treatise Śivaneṟiprakāśam, a new Śaiva Siddhānta treatise in 215 verses. Yōgi, a Brahmin Sannyāsi of the Śaiva school, wore the saffron robe; but otherwise the other Śaiva *Sannyāsis* wore only the white dress.

Contemporary records, not only literary but epigraphical also, say that the religious head was known as Baṇḍāram (a treasure

house for the grace of God). During the centuries, this term had fallen in repute and come to denote an indigent mendicant and beggar and so from the 19th century, the religious head came to be called among the Śaivas, Bhandāra Sannidhi.

Now these Śaiva heads, were not Brahmins, but were Śaivas. The head of the Sūryanār koil mutt was a Brahmin. He claimed descent from Śiva at Kailāś through Skanda and Vāmadēva rishi, while all the other heads claimed descent from Śiva, at Kailāś through Nandi and Sanatkumāra rishi. Among the Śaivas generally the colour of the dress appears not to have mattered much.

But times changed, and during this period, the 16th century, the saffron robe seems to have acquired added dignity among the masses. Naturally the heads who were till then wearing only white dress now thought of putting on the saffron robe. The Suryanārkoil mutt was considered the senior mutt (*Periya matham*) since it was presided over by a Brahmin. In those days the Brahmin was held high in the social rung and so, the Suryanarkoil mutt was held to be the senior in those days because its head was a Brahmin. Śivāgra Yōgi was the head of this mutt. Besides he was the author of many religious books in Sanskrit and in Tamiḷ, and the reverence shown to him was quite natural. So when the other Śaiva heads wanted to put on the saffron robe, he supplied them all the required saffron-dyed clothes. No extra significance was attached to this.

But the other Brahmin *Sannyāsis* were not in a mind to recognise this. They held that the saffron robe was the particular preserve of the Brahmin ascetic, and so could not tolerate the intrusion of the Śaiva who was not a Brahmin, into their preserve. So long as it was Śivāgra Yōgi the Brahmin head of a Śaiva mutt, it did not matter, because he was a Brahmin and entitled to be an āchārya. But the introduction of the saffron robe into the other mutts was not liked by them. So they carried on an agitation against this and a deputation was taken to Sēvappa Nāyaka, the ruler of Tañjāvur (1572–1614), protesting against this. As the dress was a small matter, they had given a deeper motive for this protest. They contended that the Śaiva as a *sūdra*, as

he was considered in those days in the four *varṇa* classification, could not become a spiritual preceptor. According to the Brahmin Sannyāsis, the Śaiva could not be a preceptor, could not give spritual initiation, could not be an ācārya. The saffron robe question was there in the background, unvoiced. Now this Nayak, himself a devout person who had risen from the lowest rungs to the position of the ruler of the State, had great respect towards Śivāgra Yōgi, and he had built for the Yōgi his monastry and other buildings. So when this protest was made before him he naturally referred it to Yōgi, who was not only an erudite Śaiva scholar but also a Brahmin, qualified to give a clarification on this point raised by the Brahmins.

Śivāgra Yōgi would have felt much amused at the question brought before him. He seems to have been a spiritually enlightened person, who had transcended the shackles of caste. He had felt that in spiritual evolution, caste had no place and that all humanity was one. So he gave his judgement in the matter to the effect that the Śaivas could indeed become ācāryas, could impart spiritual initiation, and could become spiritual heads donning the saffron robe.

Mere words would not suffice. The Brahmin *Sannyāsis* wanted definite scriptural evidence to support Yōgi's decision. So, Śivāgra Yōgi wrote a large treatise to establish that the Śaivas were entitled to *Sannyāsa*, were entitled to be ācāryas and to don the saffron robe. The treatise is now called the *Śaiva Sannyāsa Paddhati.* It is in eight chapters dealing with the Śaiva personal disciplines, Śiva *pūja* rules, the *Dahara vidyā* and *Pañcākṣara*, the *Bhikṣa* of the *Sannyāsi* and the *Ajapā mantra, Çātur māsya vrata, Dikṣa* and *Pañcākṣara upadēsa*, the *Sannyāsa* order and office, *Jata* or matted locks and the *Sannyāsi's* installation as the head, and lastly the rituals connected with his death, the *Śivaliṅga pratiṣtha* and attendant *pūja* rituals. The whole treatise is in prose but for every line of his writing, Yōgi quotes the āgamas profusely. 27 āgamas and 27 other theological books in Sanskrit are extracted by him. The book is a mine of information and an authoritative source book not only on Śaiva Sannyāsa but also on most matter

connected with Śiva *Pūja.* Here Yōgi has established beyond dispute that the scriptures confer the right to *Sannyāsa* and *ācārya*-hood, no tonly on the Brahmins but on other learned and disciplined spiritual leaders also. The writing settled the problem once and for all, and from that day the heads of the Śaiva mutts have been holding the position of Ācāryas or religious heads, unquestioned, in peace and with dignity.

Another book written by Yōgi on the subject of Śiva pūja, called *Kriyā Dipika* holds equal authority with *S'aiva Sannyāsa Paddhati* in this regard.

Yōgi has referred to Sēvappa Nāyaka of Tañjavūr and Sadaśivarāya at Vijayanagar (1542–1580) in the prefatory verses to his *S'aiva Sannyāsa Paddhati*:—When Sadaśivarāya was ruling and when, under his command, Sinna Sēvayācyuta was ruling over many chiefs, like the churner churning the ocean of milk, in Tañjavūr in the Cōḷa dēśa, where the daughter of the Sahya mountain flows and which is celebrated by Brahmins and devas, Śivāgra Yōgi, revered throughout the world, writes through the grace of Sadaśiva ācārya, the *S'aiva Sannyāsa Paddhati* which serves as the oars that help one to cross the ocean of the Śivāgamas.

That the Sūdras (as the Śaivas of the period were called) were also entitled to headship is established through passages from the *Kālōttara* and the *Kāmika,* which lay down that one who is a *jñānavān* (an enlightened person) is entitled to be a *guru* even if he has no other qualification; that even *gṛhasthas* of the four *varṇas* can become *gurus.*

It may also be pointed out that the objection to the saffron robe could not be held valid in the 16th century. Earlier in the 15th century, Aruṇagirinātha refers to those who seek to mortify the body by wearing the saffron robe, growing matted locks and living in the forest, eating only the fruits and roots; it is clear he refers to the Śaivas, as only they wear the matted locks. There is a still earlier reference in the words of Āṇḍāḷ in her famous *Tiruppāvai,* where she says that it was already dawn, seeing that the Śaiva devotees who wore the saffron robe, coloured

like the red-brick powder, had already gone to open their temples. This mention was much earlier than even Śaṅkara. Probably after him, the Smārtha Brahmins had considered this robe as their special preserve and did not like the others putting on this robe and assuming spiritual headship.

The story of the objection of the *Smārtha Sannyāsis* for Śaiva Sannyāsa in the court of Sēvappa Nāyaka and its final disposal by Śivāgra Yōgi by the production of his *Śaiva Sannyāsa Paddhati* is narrated in the introduction to the Śivāgra Bhāṣyam edition of 1920 written by Ilakkaṇam Muttukkumārasvāmi Tambirān, disciple of Sri Muttukkumāra Dēśika Svāmi, Head of the Sūryanārkoil mutt. The whole incident and history were also told to the author by the late Sri Mīnakṣisundara Dēśika Svāmi, the next pontiff of the Sūryanārkoil mutt.

It must be remembered that the period was the latter half of the 16th century, when the Brahmin was held in high esteem. Śivāgra Yōgi was himself a Brahmin and an *ācārya* no doubt; but he transcended the limits of caste and creed, and laid down that any Śaiva could be an āçārya, a spiritual head, provided he underwent the disciplines, had initiation through an authorized *guru* and was himself enlightened. He did not like to perpetuate supremacy for the Brahmin community. History tells us that his own preceptor was a *Vēlāla*, not a Brahmin; some four generations after him, his own *āçārya pītha* the Sūryanārkoil mutt passed on to ācāryas outside his own community.

MAHĒNDRAVARMAN'S PARADOXICAL BIRUDAS[1]

BY

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(*Sanskrit translation by* THIRU A. VISHNU BHAT, M.A.)

The Pallava king Mahēndravarman-I, is widely acknowledged as one of the outstanding rulers of South India. His reign during the early part of the seventh century A.D. was a time of great revival for the Śaivite and Vaishṇavite faiths, even as Buddhism and Jainism were declining.

Mahēndravarman is credited with introducing to the Tamil country the practice of excavating "cave"-temples out of solid rock. Some of these cave-temples were dedicated to the Trimūrtis (Brahmā, Vishṇu, and Śiva). There is a cave-temple at Maṇḍagapaṭṭu which has three cells as sanctums for these three deities. An inscription of Mahēndra's informs us of this fact. At least one of Mahēndra's cave-temples—the one at Mahēndravāḍi—was dedicated to Vishṇu alone. Others were dedicated to Śiva.

The religious and philosophical outlook of king Mahēndra can be gathered from a study of the two plays which he authored and which have come down to us; the *Mattavilāsa Prahasana* and the *Bhagavadajjuka Prahasana.* Another source of his views is found in the various stone inscriptions engraved on his monuments. There is the famous poem inscribed in his cave-temple on the summit of the Rock Fort Hill, Tiruchirāpalli. In that same temple is engraved a long list of his *birudas.* Ordinarily, a *biruda* is a title glorifying a king in an unambiguous way. And some of Mahēndra's *birudas* do conform to this norm. Take, for instance, his title 'Dharmapālaka', which in English may be rendered as

1. Based on an article in the *Madras Christian College Magazine*, Vol. XIV.

'The protector of righteousness'. Or again, 'Satyasandha', which means 'He who sticks to the truth'. Mahēndra's best known *biruda*, 'Guṇabhara', is of this type, and means 'The bearer of virtues'.

But Mahēndra had an unusual of humour, and delighted in the paradoxical by way of adopting many strange *birudas* which have baffled scholars:

> Mahēndravarman assumed a bewildering variety of *birudas* after some of which he named his architectural excavations......He bore also a considerable number of Telugu titles, the import of many of which is mysterious, while a few like *Blapu* or *Vlasu, Mlayu, Katumtaya, Katumtarambu* etc., look more like foreign titles, probably having Khmer origins.[2]

Even many of Mahēndra's Sanskrit *birudas* are perplexing. If historians had had no knowledge of Mahēndra's authorship of the Sanskrit farcical drama entitled *Mattavilāsa Prahasana*, what would they have made of his *biruda*, 'Mattavilāsa', which may be translated roughly as 'Mad or intoxicated sport'? It is not exactly the most complimentary *biruda* for a king, at face value. Or again, the *biruda* 'Virasa', which at face value translates into 'Insipid', or 'Tasteless'. Another *biruda* of his is 'Akaruṇa', or 'The merciless'. And a final example here is 'Saṅkīrṇajāti' which, again at face value, means 'Of mixed caste'.

I suggest that a philosophical and linguistic analysis will help in understanding the paradoxical nature of these titles. And the key to this understanding is the Gaṇēśa Ratha inscription of Māmallapuram which is attributable to king Paramēśvara-I (Mahēndra's grandson). In the Gaṇēśa Ratha inscription, which is

2. Dr. T. V. Mahalingam, *Kāñcipuram in Early South Indian History* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1969), pp. 70 & 71. The suggestion of foreign origin of some of Mahēndra's *birudas* was made even earlier by T. N. Subramaniam in his book, *The Pallavas of Kāñchi in South-East Asia* (Madras: Swadesamitran Ltd., 1957), pp. 76 & 79.

Sanskrit poetry, Śiva is described in seemingly paradoxical pairs of epithets. For instance, consider this passage:

> May he (Śiva) be victorious!—he who is both 'Amāya', and yet 'Chitramāya'; who is 'Aguṇa', and yet 'Guṇabhājana'; who is 'Svastha', and yet 'Niruttara'; who is 'Anīśa', and yet 'Paramēśvara'.[3]

Let us consider the first apparent paradox where Śiva is claimed to be both 'Amāya' and yet 'Chitramāya'. If the mundane world of ordinary sense experience is taken to be the effect of God's creative power, 'Māya', then, to say that Śiva is 'A-māya' would, in one sense, mean that he does not have such creative power. But the next half of the figure of speech asserts that Śiva is 'Chitramāya'. That is, he not only possesses the power of 'Māya', but it is amazing ('Chitra').

But this apparent paradox is resolved once the term 'Amāya' is rightly perceived to mean that the primeval God (Śiva) is immutable and cannot be equated with the transient world which is produced through his creative power.

Thus we may translate the first portion of the passage as follows:

> May he (Śiva) be victorious!—he who is both immutable (*amāya*) and yet the ground of all transient existence (*chitramāya*);......

There is nothing paradoxical about the passage when interpreted in this way.

The other apparent paradoxes may be resolved in a similar way. We give below a table to illustrate this:

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3. The full passage reads:

SAMBHAVASTHITISAMHĀRAKĀRAṆAM VĪTAKĀRAṆAḤ
BHŪYĀDATYANTAKĀMĀYA JAGATĀM KĀMAMARDANAḤ 1
AMĀYASHCHITRAMĀYŌSAVAGUṆŌ GUṆABHĀJANAḤ
SVASTHŌ NIRUTTARŌ JĪYĀDANĪŚAḤ PARAMĒŚVARAḤ 2

SEEMING PARADOX		RESOLUTION	
Negative & *undesirable*	Positive & *desirable*	Negative & *desirable*	Positive & *desirable*
AMĀYA vs.	CHITRAMĀYA	AMĀYA &	CHITRAMĀYA
(powerless)	(amazing power)	(immutable)	(ground of all transient being)
AGUṆA vs.	GUṆABHĀJANA	AGUṆA &	GUṆABHĀJANA
(no virtues)	(vessel of all virtues)	(quality-less)	vessel of all qualities)
SVASTHA vs.	NIRUTTARA[4]	SVASTHA &	NIRUTTARA
(alone & helpless)	(superior to all)	(self-sufficient)	(superior to all)
ANĪŚA vs.	PARAMĒŚVARA	ANĪŚA &	PARAMĒŚVARA
(leader-less & thus helpless	(the Supreme Lord)	(beyond all need of help)	(the Supreme Lord)

The extreme left column lists the negative term of each seemingly paradoxical pair. It is the *undesirable* connotation latent in each of the negative terms which gives rise to the paradoxical effect.

However, each negative term also has a desirable connotation. When each of the negative terms is understood in its desirable sense, then paradox disappears:

> May he (Śiva) be victorious!—he who is both immutable (*amāya*) and yet the ground of all transient existence (*chitramāya*)); who is both without qualities (*aguṇa*), and yet the ground of all qualities (*guṇabhājana*); who is completely self-sufficient (*svastha*) and is therefore without

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4. In this pair, 'Niruttara' is actually a negative term having a desirable meaning and 'Svastha' is a positive term having an undesirable connotation (alone and helpless). The paradox and its resolution, however, are otherwise similar to the other pairs.

superior (*niruttara*); who is without lord (*aniśa*) because he is the Supreme Lord (*Paramēśvara*)!

Mahēndra's linguistic exercise with regard to some of his own titles is even more compressed than Paramēśvara's. This is because each title or *biruda* is a unit in itself. It is the 'paradoxical' group of titles of Mahēndra which I now wish to analyse. Each separate *biruda* in this group generates two or three distinct levels of meaning to create its effect of paradox.

The first level involves the most obvious connotation of the word which is used as a title—which connotation is negative and *undesirable*. Thus 'Virasa' is 'Insipid'; 'Akaruṇa' is 'Merciless'; and 'Saṅkīrṇṇajāti' is 'Of mixed caste'.

The second level is generated from the possible *desirable* connotations of the terms still negatively conceived. Thus 'Virasa' becomes 'One who has attenuated his sensual experience'—as for instance a sanyasin would do; 'Akaruṇa' becomes 'One who is relentless' (in his duties of maintaining a just and orderly society)—or perhaps more simply 'One who is merciless (to evil-doers)'; and Saṅkīrṇṇajāti' becomes a particular name, some scholars would say, of a mixed *raga* (melodic scale) in music—and thus the title would indicate Mahēndra as its inventor. Be that as it may, we shall suggest that there is still another meaning of this *biruda* which can co-exist with the above.

This brings us to the third level of meaning generated by a few of these title terms. At this third level, 'Virasa' sheds its negative aspect altogether and is transformed into the wholly positive meaning of 'He of extraordinary sensitivity' (in matters artistic or spiritual)......This transformation is possible because the prefix 'vi–' in Sanskrit can have a positive as well as a negative effect.

'Saṅkīrṇṇajāti' may turn out at the third level to have a rather philosophical import. This title appears in Mahēndra's Tiruchi cave-temple which also has the famous poetical composition inscribed near the Gaṅgādhara image carved on one of the rock

walls of its maṇḍapam. And the clue to the higher meaning of 'Saṅkīrṇṇajāti' is found in the fourth line of the poem:

> ......STHĀṆUḤ SVAYAÑ CHA SAHA TĒNA JAGATSU JĀTAḤ.

The context of this passage is the claim that king Mahēndra had an image of Śiva created in his cave-temple (Tiruchi) which image was at the same time a portrait of the king, himself.[5] Thus, the poem informs us, by creating this fixed image-cum-portrait, the meaning of Śiva's title 'Sthāṇu' (fixed, stationary) became appropriate, and the king himself became 'Sthāṇu' (fixed, immortal) together with Śiva in the world.

The religious and philosophical significance of this verbal and visual pun—or *dhvani*, to use the more appropriate Sanskrit term—is that the king had attained spiritual union with God. 'Saṅkīrṇṇajāti' signifies precisely this spiritual birth ('—jāti') into the knowledge of this union ('Saṅkīrṇṇa—') with God. We should also be aware of the presumption that the union is an eternal fact with regard to all creatures, but it is the birth of the realization of this union to which the king alludes.

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5. We have discussed this issue in detail in our article, "Pallava Gaṅgādhara", *Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha*, Vol. XXVIII, Parts 3-4 (July-October, 1972), pp. 159-166.

A COMPARISON OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN HINDU INTERPRETATIONS OF CHĀNDOGYA UPANIṢAD (IV. 4. 5)

BY

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The Chāndogya Upaniṣad contains a well-known account of the circumstances in which Satyakāma Jābāla was accepted for initiation by Gautama Hāridrumata. It runs as follows.

> Satyakāma, the son of Jābāla, addressed his mother and said: 'I wish to become a Brahmacārin (religious student), mother. Of what family am I?" She said to him: "I do not know, my child, of what family thou art. In my youth when I had to move about much as a servant (waiting on the guests in my father's house) I conceived thee. I do not know of what family thou art. I am Jābāla by name, thou art Satyakāma. Say that thou art Satyakāma Jābāla." He going to Gautama Hāridrumata, said to him. "I wish to become *Brahmacārin* with you, Sir. May I come to you, Sir?" He said to him: "Of what family are you, my friend?" He replied: "I do not know, Sir, of what family I am. I asked my mother and she answered: 'In my youth when I had to move about much as a servant, I conceived thee. I do not know of what family thou art. I am Jābāla, by name, thou art Satyakāma.' I am therefore Satyakāma Jābāla, Sir." He said to him: "No one but a true Brahmin will thus speak out. Go and fetch fuel,

friend, I shall initiate you. You have not swerved from the truth."[1]

This passage has played a significant role in the history of Hindu thought. It is alluded to in the Brahmasūtra (I. 3. 37), and is commented upon by Śaṅkara[2] and Rāmānuja,[3] two great Hindu thinkers of medieval India. In modern times, the passage is remarked upon by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan[4] and other modern Hindu thinkers as K. M. Sen[5] and T. M. P. Mahadevan.[6]

The purpose of this paper is to compare the conclusions drawn on the basis of this passage by the medieval Hindu thinkers on the one hand and by modern Hindu thinkers on the other.

II

The actual remark with which Gautama Hāridrumata accepted Satyakāma Jābāla as a pupil contains the statement "An *a-brāhmaṇa* will not speak thus."[7] *This is the crucial statement.* The Brahmasūtra, in discussing the eligibility of the Sūdras to Brahma-knowledge, alludes to this and says that what was really happening here was that Gautama Hāridrumata was ascertaining whether Satyakāma Jābāla *was a Sūdra*, for, as a Sūdra, he would not be eligible for Vedic study[8] and therefore could not be initiated. Thus by saying that a non-*brāhmaṇa* will not speak thus Gautama

1. English translation by Max Müller, from Hindu Scriptures, Everyman's Library, 1938, pp. 148-9, as cited by K. M. Sen, *Hinduism*, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1961, p. 30 fn. 1.
2. George Thibaut, *The Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa with the Commentary by Saṅkara*, Part I, New York: Dover Publications, 1962, p. 228.
3. George Thibaut, *The Vedānta Sūtras with the Commentary of Rāmānuja*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904, p 342.
4. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, 1957, p. 64.
5. K. M. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 30 fn. 1.
6. T. M. P. Mahadevan, *Outlines of Hinduism*, Bombay: Chetana, Ltd., p. 72.
7. See *Ten Principal Upanishads with Saṅkarabhāṣya*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1964, p. 198.
8. *Infra*, pp. 223-29.

Hāridrumata has determined the Brahminhood—that is, the non—Śūdrahood—of the young boy and can now initiate him as he is not a Śūdra.

This understanding of the incident is elaborated by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja along the same lines. Thus Śankara remarks:

> The Śūdras are not qualified for the reason also that Guatama, having ascertained Jābāla not to be a Śūdra from his speaking the truth, proceeded to initiate and instruct him. "None who is not a Brāhmaṇa would thus speak out. Go and fetch fuel, friend, I shall initiate you. You have not swerved from the truth" (Ch. Up. IV. 4, 5.); which scriptural passage furnishes an inferential sign (of the Śūdras not being capable of initiation).[9]

Rāmānuja says essentially the same thing, though more briefly:

> That a Śūdra is not qualified for knowledge of Brahman appears from the fact also that as soon as Gautama has convinced himself that Jābāla, who wishes to become his pupil, is not a Śūdra, he proceeds to teach him the knowledge of Brahman.[10]

It is clear therefore that in the understanding of medieval Hindu thinkers the real significance of the incident lies in the implication *that a Śūdra does not qualify for Brahmavidyā*.[11]

9. George Thibaut *The Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa with the Commentary by Saṅkara*, p. 228.

10. George Thibaut, *The Vedānta Sūtras with the Commentary of Rāmānuja*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904, p. 343.

11. It is a trifle surprising that to buttress their point neither Śaṅkara nor Rāmānuja quite the damningly pertinent remark in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa that a Śūdra is "untruth itself", and having thus quoted it, institute a stark comparison between this and Satyakāma's truthfulness suggestive of his Brāhmaṇahood!

III

When we move on to *modern Hindu thinkers*, however, we find them again drawing a *common conclusion* on the basis of this incident just as Bādarāyaṇa, Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja draw a common conclusion; but their common conclusion is not the *same conclusion* as the one drawn by these earlier Hindu thinkers. Thus S. Radhakrishnan's epitome of the incident does not reiterate the medieval conclusion that the incident spotlights the disqualification of the Śūdra. Rather, he introduces a selection from the Chāndogya Upaniṣad with the remark:

> This is the oldest and the best known of the Upaniṣad. Many important teachings are contained in it, but perhaps the most popular passage in the whole work is the story of Satyakāma Jābāla and his truthful mother, in which it is demonstrated that the status of the *Brāhmin* is determined by character rather than by birth.[12]

A similar conclusion is drawn on the basis of this episode by T. M. P. Mahadevan. After commenting that "caste is primarily a question of character"[13] and that "Conduct counts and not lineage,"[14] he recounts the "interesting incident"[15] recorded in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad and concludes: "In Satyakāma's case then, it was character and not birth that determined his caste."[16] Similarly, K. M. Sen narrates the incident with the prefatory remark: "That, at least in theory, caste was looked upon as a matter of character rather than birth alone, is clearly seen in an interesting story of Chāndogya Upaniṣad."[17]

12. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
13. T. M. P. Mahadevan, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
17. K. M. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 30 fn. 1. His conclusion is slightly more guarded than the one drawn by S. Radhakrishnan and T. M. P. Mahadevan in that he does not completely negate the birth-ascription of caste but rather regards the incident as suggesting that it does not depend on

Thus while on the one hand the circumstances in which Satyakāma Jābāla was initiated by Gautama Hāridrumata are interpreted as implying the disqualification of the Śūdra from Brahma-knowledge by medieval Hindu thinkers, modern Hindu thinkers regard the incident as suggestive of the fact that it is not birth but character which determines caste.

IV

In conclusion it may be pointed out that this divergence in the interpretation of the incident by medieval and modern Hindu thinkers, when viewed closely, turns out to be of great and perhaps even revolutionary significance. To see this we have to cousult the broader social orientations within which these positions are lodged. The social outlook of medieval Hinduism is generally regarded as having been rigid in which one's birth determined whether one was a Brāhmaṇa or a Śūdra. As a Śūdra, one did not qualify for Vedic studies. Thus the "accident" of one's birth determined whether one had access to Brahmavidyā or not. And the Satyakāma Jābāla episode seemed to confirm this "conservative" position.

The social outlook of modern Hinduism, by contrast, is liberal.[18] There is the increasing recognition that the rigidity of the caste-system has held the country and the culture back. The

birth *alone*. A conclusion somewhat different from the one mentioned in this paper *may* be drawn on the basis of this incident, which occurs in the section of the Vedas designated as *Jñānakāṇḍa* as distinguished from *Karmakāṇḍa* and *Upāsanākāṇḍa* (vide T. M. P. Mahadevan, *op. cit.*, p. 31). It could be maintained with this incident in view that, although the Śūdra may not be eligible for Vedic studies of the ritual section of the Vedas, he may be eligible for Vedic studies pertaining to the knowledge section. Is it on account of this and similar accounts that Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya writes, "Śūdras may read from the *Upanishads* the Mahābhārata, and the Purāṇas, but not from the Vedic Saṁhitas"? (See Kenneth W. Morgan, ed., *The Religion of the Hindus Interpreted by Hindus*, New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1953, p. 203).

18. See K. M. Sen, *op. cit.*, Chapter 4; T. M. P. Mahadevan, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-75; S. Radhakrishnan, *The Hindu View of Life*, London: Unwin Books, 1965, passim.

rigidity of the caste-system flows from regarding it as based on *birth*. If, however, it is regarded as based on *character*, an element of flexibility is introduced in the situation. Now *anyone* can be a Brahmin if he possesses the qualities characteristic of a Brahmin and as a Brahmin by worth, not by birth, by "nurture" not by "nature", he can qualify for Vedic studies. Herein lies the potentially revolutionary significance of the modern interpretation. On the earlier interpretation the disbarment of the Śūdras from Vedic studies was justified on the basis of the incident described in Chāndogya Upaniṣad IV. 4. 1–5; on the modern interpretation the Vedas are, *in effect*, being thrown open to all who want to and are capable of studying them on the basis of that very reference!

TRADITION, SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL REFORM

BY

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Social reforms as a social process for the development of society are considered as agents to restructure the social relationships in society. These social reforms in their functional levels manifest impotence as they have to face retarding or restraining forces from tradition and social structure about which and for which the very same reforms have concern. This is more evident in villages in India where social reforms aim to manipulate the tradition and social structure for overall socio-economic and political development. Social reforms in the villages face the inheritance of a complex system of habits, attitudes and values, social system of practices and beliefs. Village population and their social relationships reflect caste hierarchy with inequalities among themselves as a "social practice and social sanction in the form of untouchability." This practice of untouchability determines the inter-caste relationship in the villages by the maintenance of social distance and physical distance to the extent that the breath and shadow of the individuals are said to pollute a person of another caste.

Taking untouchability as a social evil, Indian Constitution as a basic law of the country, among its many provisions envisages the elimination of caste-oriented injustices and inequlities. It provides "penal offences to restrict the access to any public place maintained wholly or partly out of the State funds dedicated to the use of general public." It removed disabilities to admission into any educational institutions.

The frame work of such reform on the elements of caste is for the "viable group formation, and development of local leaders

local institutions of governance in a democractic process for the co-ordinated mobilisation of community action in the villages in India, to raise the status of the members of social relationships."

How far these social reforms create an impact on the village society? These reforms are in reality a legislative inerts without any impact to realise the declared objectives of Indian Constitution. It looks as though that the caste is so deeply entrenched in Indian tradition that it cannot be eradicated by law. Firstly, the political. structure of our country, literacy and econmic levels of the scheduled castes tend to perpetuate the caste-orientation of any groups and, for that matter scheduled castes are not of exceptional groups. Universal franchise is the basic element of our political structure. But at the same time the franchise exercising population of scheduled castes are a large mass of illiterates and a miserably poor and economic group. The political communication by the political parties cannot be done by a direct method of confrontation by developing insights in them. As a group, in the absence of education, the group has persons of king-pins who are traditional leaders. If these traditional leaders of caste groups are socialised, the whole group is getting socialised. The dynamics of such political socialisation is but the arousal of caste sentiments. The result is that the distinctness of scheduled castes is accepted more and more tacitly and also privately enforced. Politicians who condemn caste-oriented practices in their major policy framework tend to work and plan for their political strategies and power—seeking exercises through the caste-oriented groups only.

Secondly, the scheduled castes in most of the cases do not send their children to schools. The reform measures include, among many of operational and institutional services, namely the free and supportive educational services. Again, the economic status of most of the scheduled castes coupled with their inevitable traditional values of "Childern-labour-economic asset" stand in the way of education of their children. Each child within the family is an economic asset as early as it could walk with its limbs. They are trained and socialised in the parental vocation of meagre economic return. The traditional poverty frame work of these

scheduled castes group develops in them a sense of fatalism about the children. The rearing responsibilities are not an economic feasibility for them. So the children in their early age itself are made to work to earn for their livelihood. This inevitable economic structure of the family associated with tradition deprives them to realise the provisions of social reform. Thus, the scheduled castes are not only untouchables but also untouched by social reform provisions.

Thirdly, the occupational structure of scheduled castes in the villages in India is totally agricultural labour. In the villages the inter-caste relationship cannot be a possiblity by marriage or community life. But the occupation provides abundant source of inter-caste relationship. Village India maintains a system of economic structure where agriculture is predominent. The occupational involvement in such agricultural sector is the one within which inter-caste-relationships takes place. Mutual dependency is there. But the dependency is unidirectional where these scheduled castes in their large numbers live as landless labourers. On the one hand, the agricultural sector is not fast in shedding this kind of labour intensive occupational structure so that, these untouchables can be deliberately diverted to other non-traditional occupations where the traditional submissive relationship of labour and landlord system will be absent. On the other hand, the untouchables cannot deliberately avail the institutional welfare services and diversify the occupational choices as there is no co-ordination of training, marketing and developments services.

Fourthly, the use of common sources such as wells and ponds in the villages are influenced by tradition and social structure. Wells for drinking water and roads for funeral procession are still under the scope of caste factions. The scheduled castes though by caste as a separate entity serve the whole village for certain purposes, they are non-discriminatory in the use of the wells and roads. There is a mutual role for each caste in the village social and economic activities. The assigned role for scheduled castes are not in reality for reciprocal survival of all the caste-groups in the village. Instead, these scheduled castes have to perform the assigned role

for the survival of other caste groups. This inevitable traditional social relationship of scheduled castes is not recognised in the event of the claim for the use of common wells for drinking water and roads for the funeral processions.

Fifthly, the traditional village councils or Nyāya Pañchayats are the unofficial but at the same time effective instruments of survival inspite of the establishment of common local Pañchāyats by democratic methods and the spread Judicial and magisterial service at the village level.

Sixthly, as William Wiser and others said, after having lived and worked among them, these scheduled castes under the traditional social structure of segregation and submission, are of social psychological syndromes bound by the self attitude and feeling of acceptance of tradition without question. This behaviour of an average scheduled castes particularly of the one belonging to the rural community for simple reason can only be explained in terms of some fundamental traditional values.

All these factors highlight that these scheduled castes as core individuals in village social system are bound by the tradition which forms part of the economic, agrarian, occupational and political structure and through which the socialisation of inertness is taking place and that have been internalised in their personality. But the social reforms concerning scheduled castes envisage with severe sociological limitations. It takes into consideration of persons in isolation. If men are integrated, in social-structure frame work the action for unity and inter-caste-relationship can be achieved. These reforms establish institutions where the less privileged men can have benefits very much akin to the privileged without any regard for its functional inability, making overall alteration of social structure and tradition.

The frame to achieve a non-discriminatory society should shift from "Individual through Institutions" approach to the sub-cultural approach which highlights that the four major factors, " namely caste groups (ethnic groups) social class, religion, and rural and urban residence form in their functioning unity and have an

integrated impact on the individuals in relation to both social structure and psychological orientation. With respect to social structure they constitute the social setting within which the socialisation process and major later primary contacts take place. Psychologically they provide "social fields" with which sub-national identifiation and "Consciousness of kind" constellations are joined."[1]

The over-all observation of inter-caste relationships in the urban areas of India highlight that it is tending towards non—discriminatory society. Obviously, it is due to common exposure of all individuals to the mass stimuli of modern Industrial society where, besides the welfare institutions, a transformation of SUB-CULTURAL STRUCTURE is taking place. The sub-cultural structural approach in its operational level aims to analyse and form a distinct references of group relations within the following considerations i.e. The nature of class divisions within the particular caste-groups; the extent towards which the members of particular class within a caste system have to identify and institutional contacts with members of the same class of a different caste-groups; The extent with which members or a particular class in a particular caste group have social contacts with members of the same caste group but of a lower and higher class. The integration of such sub—cultural-structural transformation along with institutional welfare services may be the fundamental frame work of social reforms for establishing a non-discriminatory society.

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1. Milton M. Godon—*Social Structure and Goals in group relations.* Morroe Berger—*Freedom and control in modern society,* 1954, p. 143.

KUṞIÑCHI-K-KAḌAVUḶ

BY

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Aintiṇai :

The ancient Tamiḻs noted that the habitable parts of the country were divisible into five natural regions with the name 'Tiṇai' (திணை) and the manifestation of human life corresponded to the characteristics of the milieu in which each tribe had grown. The five regions or Tiṇais were (1) Mullai, the forest region, (2) Kuṟiñchi, the hilly country, (3) Marudam, the fertile delta areas of the plains, (4) Neydal, the coastal land or the littoral tract stretching along the sea-coast, and (5) Pālai, the desert land. Each Tiṇai or region was a separate entity having a particular variety of people with a distinct behaviour and their supreme deity. Tolkāppiyam (தொல்காப்பியம்) the earliest extant Tamiḻ grammar prescribes Māyōn (Tirumāl), Sēyōn (Murugan), Vēndan (Indran) and Varuṇan respectively as the gods of the four regions and Goddess Koṟṟavai as the supreme deity of the Pālai.

Māyōn mēya Kāḍuṟai Ulagamum
Sēyōn mēya maivarai Ulagamum
Vēndan mēya thīmpunal Ulagamum
Varuṇan mēya perumaṇal Ulagamum
Mullai Kuṟinchi Marudam Neydal ena-c-
Collia muṟaiyāl collavum padumē.

(Tol. Poruḷ. Agam. 5)

Ciṟanda, Koṟṟavai nilaiyum.

(Tol. Poruḷ. Puṟam. 4)

மாயோன் மேய காடுறை யுலகமும்
சேயோன் மேய மைவரை யுலகமும்
வேந்தன் மேய தீம்புனல் உலகமும்
வருணன் மேய பெருமணல் உலகமும்

முல்லை குறிஞ்சி மருதம் நெய்தல் எனச்
சொல்லிய முறையால் சொல்லவும் படுமே.

(தொல். பொருள். அகம். 5)

சிறந்த கொற்றவை நிலையும்.

(தொல். பொருள். புறம். 4)

However there was not any water-tight compartment between one region and the other; especially in the case of flora and fauna.

Ennila maruṅkil Pūvum puḷḷum
Annilam poḻutoḍu vārā āyinum
Vanda nilattin payatta ākum.

(Tol. Porul. Agam. 21)

எந்நில மருங்கில் பூவும் புள்ளும்
அந்நிலம் பொழு தொடு வாரா ஆயினும்
வந்த நிலத்தின் பயத்த ஆகும்.

(தொல். பொருள். அகம். 21)

This five-fold division of land was called 'Aintiṇai' (ஐந்திணை) (Tiṇai means land).

Seṅkēḻ Murugan:

In course of time, Vēndan and Varuṇan lost their separate identity and Murugan (முருகன்), the supreme diety of Kuriñchi region became prominent and his worship gradually spread to and flourished in other regions also. Tolkāppiyam which introduces Tirumāl (திருமால்), Murugan, Vēndan, Varuṇan and Koṛṛavai keeps silent about Śivan (சிவன்), the supposed father of Murugan; but it introduces Murugan as Sēyōn, which is interpreted, according to the traditions of the Āryans, as the son of Śiva. According to the Tamiḻian tradition, Murugan was the son of the terrible Koṛṛavai, the victorious matron.

Veṛṛi velpōr—k—koṛṛavai ciṛuva

(Tirumurugāṛṛuppaḍai 258)

வெற்றி வெல் போர்க் கொற்றவை சிறுவ.

(திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை. 258)

Nachinārkkiniyar (நச்சினார்க்கினியர்) one of the famous commentators of Tolkāppiyam, interprets the term 'Sēyōn' as 'Seṅkēḻ Murugan

(செங்கேழ் முருகன்), that is Murugan who is 'Red in complexion, which seems to be one of the fundamental elements for beauty. (Sem=Red; keḻ=colour). Hence, P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar says that Sēyōn means the 'Red God'—derived from the word Sēy which means Red. This is more convincing and seems to be probable.

Veṟṟi—c—Cevvēḷ vēlan

(Silappadikāram. 25 : 25)

வெற்றிச் செவ்வேள் வேலன்.

(*சிலப்பதிகாரம். 25 : 25*)

Kuṟiñchi Vēndan:

As we have seen already, the Kuṟiñchi was the hilly and mountainous region and the name Kuṟiñchi might have been adopted from the Kuṟiñchi flower, which is common in the hilly region. Even now, the Kuṟiñchi flower which blossoms once in twelve years is available in abundance in the Nilgiris (நீலகிரி மலை), Paḻani (பழனிமலை), Kōdaikkānal Hills (கோடைக்கானல் மலை), and the adjacent parts of the Western Ranges. The flowering season will continue for about six months and it attracts people in large numbers even from far off places. Murugan is the Lord of such beautiful Kuṟiñchi or hilly region and hence Maṇḍalapuruḍar (மண்டல புருடர்) the author of Coodāmaṇi Nikaṇḍu (சூடாமணி நிகண்டு) rightly describes him as "Vēynta poonk Kuṟiñchi Vēndan" (வேய்ந்த பூங்குறிஞ்சி வேந்தன்; Lord of Kuṟiñchi which is naturally adorned with Kuṟiñchi flowers). Nikaṇḍu is a kind of Dictionary of synonyms, which embodies meanings for all rare Tamiḻ words in verse form which can be easily got by heart, Till the early period of this century, it was memorised by every one who wanted to master Tamiḻ Literature.

Shelter and food were the two inevitable needs of the primitive man and Kuṟiñchi region offered both to him with its natural caves and resources such as greens, fruits and roots and even providing scope for living on hunting. Hence the Kuṟiñchi folk had made considerable progress in their way of living. Roughly speaking, by the time of the opening centuries of the Christian

era, they had advanced far from the primitive stage of human culture. Cultivation became common ; the social institutions had well developed ; and the religious faith had taken root, which paved the way for the popular worship of Murugan, the Supreme deity of the region. The reflections of all these things can be observed in the earliest stream of Tamiḻ literature as well.

Murugan Worship:

In consideration of the various other deities, Murugan had been undoubtedly the pre-eminent god of Tamiḻs all through the ages. The name Murugan had been derived from the root 'Murugu', which means beauty, fragrance, youth, honey, God etc. This very idea suggests that the ancient Tamiḻs had associated their God with the everlasting adolescence and beauty reflected in nature. The spear, which is called Vēl (வேல்) was his particular and victorious weapon and from this he was called 'Vēlan' (வேலன்). The beautiful peacock, queen among the birds, which has also recently been accepted as our National Bird, is his carrier or mount. The emblem of his flag is either the peacock or the cock and the garland of kaḍambu flower (கடம்ப மலர் மாலை) is favourite to him.

The common worship of Murugan in those days consisted of adoring him with flowers and offering Tinai (தினை ; millet) and honey which were the main products of the Kuṛiñchi region and paddy also was offered at times. Adoring God with flowers and the use of incense were an ancient practice prevalent among Tamiḻs. The flower represents the heart and the incense the melting of it. Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḍai (திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை) reveals that the pattern of worship conducted by Brahmins was quite different from that of Tamiḻs. This shows that the earliest Tamiḻ deity Murugan became transformed into the Aryanised Subrahmanya even at the Saṅgam age. The term Sēyōn for Murugan appearing in Tolkāppiyam also indicates the admixture of the system of Aryan worship even before the Christian era. In this context we have to bear in mind, according to the Aryan tradition, the term 'Sēyon' had been derived from the root 'Sēy' which also means son.

Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḍai which extols the greatness of Murugan mentions Tirupparaṅkunṟam (திருப்பரங்குன்றம்), Tiruççīralaivāy (திருச்சீரலைவாய்); Tiruççendūr; (திருச்செந்தூர்), Tiruvāvinankuḍi (திருவாவினன்குடி); Paḻani; (பழனி), Tiruvēragam (திருவேரகம்; Swāmimalai; சுவாமிமலை), Paḻamudir sōlai (பழமுதிர் சோலை) (present Aḻgarmalai; அழகர் மலை) and Kunṟutōrāḍal (குன்று தோராடல்) most probably Tiruttaṇi (திருத்தணி) as Murugan's favourite abodes. These are all called the six military camps (paḍai veeḍu; படை வீடு) of Murugan. The riding on a peacock, marrying Vaḷḷi, the hunter-maid and having the most famous temples on hill tops, all these show that Murugan was connected with the ancient tree and serpent worship and the sylvan deities.

Origin and Antiquity:

It is a fact that the serpent is closely connected with Murugan, and it can be seen either in the idol or in the picture of Murugan seated on his mount, the peacock is standing on a cobra with its hood spread out. T. R. Sesha Iyengar is of opinion that the common name Subbā or Subbarōya found among Tamiḻ, Telugu and Canarese people may be explained to be both a contraction of Subrahmanya and a synonym for serpent. The sixth day (sashty) of every lunar month is held as peculiarly sacred to Subrahmanya as to the serpent god. Hence there should have been a close connection between the worship of Subrahmanya and that of the serpent. (*Dravidian India*, p. 115).

P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar contends that the worship of Murugan is only the outcome of the Nāgā cult. Among the many totem groups, Nāgā cult was widely prevalent and it coalesced with that of the Tamiḻ god Murugan, who was later on identified with Subrahmanya of the Aryans. To quote him:

"Even to-day Subrahmanya appears to the physical eyes of his devotees only in the form of a serpent; when a devotee of this god has invoked his help, the appearance of a serpent means that the god has granted the prayer." (*History of the Tamils* p. 76).

Man, being a social animal, became religious minded as soon as he was possessed of the fear of death; this resulted in the

creation of the supposed: gods or super-human beings to protect him. Hence he invented methods of invoking their help to avoid the real or imaginary evils threatening him and to secure things which he longs for. No doubt, from the earliest time of the evolution, man began to worship some god or other and might have gradually adopted the worship of Murugan, the regional or the guardian deity.

The urn burials of Ādiççanallūr (ஆதிச்ச நல்லூர்) in Tirunelvēli (திருநெல்வேலி) district, clearly shows the existence of the Murugan worship in Tamiḻnād before the tenth century B.C. if not much earlier. His weapon Vēl (lance) and his emblem cock and the mouth-piece used by the Kāvaḍi (காவடி) bearers to Murugan, all in bronze were found in those burials, are datable to tenth century B.C. Hence the worship of Murugan might have been in vogue in Tamiḻnād at least some centuries prior to that period and hence its antiquity and originality are undoubted.

Nature Worship :

Before entering into the story of Kārtikēya (கார்த்திகேயன்) a parallel creation of the Aryans, we have to examine the history of Śiva, for he is supposed to be the father of Kārtikēya. The origin of Śiva is somewhat obscure and probably might be an outcome of certain trends of the Dravidian primitive religion. As to the history of present day Śiva, it is clearly a blend of two lines of developments, namely the Dravidian and the Aryan, for the complex figure of Śiva, is made up of both Dravidian and Aryan elements.

The primitive man, who was afraid of Nature such as storm, thunder, lightning etc. considered them as the Supreme Beings, and as a consequence of that he adopted the worship of the Sun, the Moon, Thunder, Lightning and other such natural phenomenon. The ancient Tamiḻs also might not have been an exception to this practice. Any how they felt the need, at least, for an intangible form to be conceived for the purpose of worship.

Conception of Śivan :

The bright red light of the evening sun, attracted their attention and as a result of that, they conceived the bright red light as the intangible form of God, and later on they assigned the name 'Śiva' to it. Hence, He is referred to in Tamil literatures as "Semmēniyān" (*Tiruvāçagam*, 153; செம்மேனியான் திருவாசகம், 153.) and his appearance is compared to the sight of the bright red light of the evening sky (Sevvānanna mēni, *Agam.* invocatory song: 8. செவ்வானன்ன மேனி, அகம் கடவுள் வாழ்த்து, 8); The fire which is one of the five Natural elements, causes the bright light, and it alone can purify everything with which it comes into contact by burning the impure properties. The fire and the flame are imperishable. Hence, their identification of the Almighty with the flame is reasonable and forms the perspective for the later conceptions.

Liṅga Worship :

However, the Tamils were not satisfied with this intangible micro-cosmic image of God for worship, and they wanted to conceive a tangible form which may be visible to the physical eyes to worship with physical senses. Hence, persons with strong religious mind, according to their imagination, set up a stone image, similar to that of a small and short pillar (stump) and worshipped with offerings of flowers, fruits and grains and with all love and reverence. Later on it was called as "Kantu" (கந்து) Tolkāppiyam introduces this as Kantaḻi (கந்தழி).

Koḍinilai kantaḻi vaḷḷi enṟa
Vaḍu neengu siṟappin mudalana moonṟum
Kaḍavuḷ vāḻttoḍu kaṇṇiya varumē
(Tol. *Poruḷ. Puṟattiṇai* Iyal. 27)

கொடிநிலை கந்தழி வள்ளி என்ற
வடுநீங்கு சிறப்பின் முதலன மூன்றும்
கடவுள் வாழ்த்தொடு கண்ணிய வருமே.
(தொல். பொருள். புறத்திணை இயல். 27)

The earliest possible allusion to this is found in Paṭṭinappālai, one of the Ten Idyles, a Saṅgam classic.

Kantuḍaip podiyil. (Paṭṭinappālai, 249).
(கந்துடைப் பொதியில் பட்டினப்பாலை 249.)

The later development of the ancient stone symbol of the Tamiḻs was a cone shaped piece fixed in a circular stone. The conical shape was a representation of the bright flame, which was the imaginary image of Śiva. Such stones are found all over India and even in foreign countries such as Java, Malaysia etc. wherever the Tamiḻs had settled for commercial purposes. The lower part of the lithic symbol which is circular in form is a representation of the pit where the fire is kindled and the cone shaped upper part fixed into it stands for the form of the flame. Hence, Śiva is described as "Seḻunchuḍar Moorthy" (Tiruvācagam 542; செழுஞ் சுடர் மூர்த்தி, திருவாசகம். 542). As time went on a ring shaped stone was substituted for the lower part in which the conical stone, which had gradually been transformed into a cylindrical form fixed and anointed with oil. Then it became a full-fledged Sivalingam (சிவலிங்கம்). They put leaves and flowers on it and offered all things they used in their daily life.

From the seals found in Mohanjo Daro and Harappa, it is clear that there might have been a kind of phallic worship. But at the same time, it should be borne in mind, that according to Rig Vēda, the phallic worship was purely a non-Aryan origin. Dr. Stevenson holds that Śiva was the Tamiḻian God and was worshipped in two forms, one as a spiritual object of meditation and the other as a material symbol or Liṅga to represent the invisible to the visible eyes. To ascribe a colour and form to the Almighty who is the spiritual substance of all substances and who is beyond the reach of all five human senses and even to the human mind, may seem to be strange and even amounts to degrading the supreme Being, but it is essential for an ordinary mind to concentrate easily.

Śivan:

It will not be out of place to indicate the correct and true interpretation of the Liṅga worship. Though a great many can mistook the divine image for a phallic symbol, in reality it is a sign and image of the rhythmic creation and destruction of the

Universe. No greater error can be committed than this misapprehension of degrading the sacred symbol of Śiva. The term Śiva, does not find a place either in Tolkāppiyam or in Saṅgam classics, but there are many phrases that definitely designate Śiva, such as:

Mukkuṭ chelvar (Agam. 181 : 16)
முக்கட் செல்வர் (அகம் *181 : 16*)

Ālamar Selvan (Kuṟuntogai. 81 : 9)
ஆலமர் செல்வன் (குறுந்தொகை. *81* : 8)

After a long period, the Tamiḻs conceived the male human form for Śiva, and there are enough materials to show that the traits in the figure of Śiva, owe their origin in the Dravidian religion. The Tamiḻ expressions such as Iṟaivan (இறைவன்; He who resides in all things), Kaḍavuḷ (கடவுள்; He who transcends all beings), Kantaḻi (கந்தழி; That which exists without support) clearly indicate their belief in a Supreme Being.

Rudra :

Now let us turn to the other side of the picture, that is the Aryan deity 'Rudra', who was later on identified with 'Paśupati' and finally transformed into 'Śiva' the Dravidian God. There are very scanty references about Rudra in the Vēdic literatures. In the whole of Rig Vēda, only three entire hymns and a part of another are devoted to Rudra. The etymology of the word Rudra is uncertain for its root *rud* has many different meanings, bnt it is commonly taken in the sense of to *howl*, to *cry*, to *roar*. Pischel derives Rudra from the root *rud* meaning to be red. Grassman derives the name Rudra from the same root but gives the conjectural meaning of to *shine* or to *be bright*. Thus the term Rudra may mean either the *howler* or the *red one*, or the *bright one*.

Vēdic texts attribute Rudra to be the God of Natural forces, such as stormy winds, lightning and thunder. Hence it will not be wrong in any way to presume that the Aryans regarded him as malevolent and feared his terrible wrath and implored him not to destroy cattle and people and to avert his great malignity. Rudra, for the first time is called as Pasupati, the lord of ani-

mals in the Atarva Vēda and then he is portrayed as merciful. However the terrible and destructive Rudra became gracious when he was propitiated by people. Rig Veda conjoins him with *Sōma*, which might have been the probable cause for his suboridnate position at the early ages. The worship of Śiva was in vogue among the Tamils long before the advent of the Aryans and then the Aryans identified Rudra with Siva.

Western Verdict :

According to Slater, Śiva is the Dravidian deity and Ragozin holds that the worship of Śiva was originally Dravidian and Ferguson also maintains that Śaivism is certainly a local and not an Aryan form of faith. T. R. Sesha Iyengar is of opinion that the very name Rudra, meaning the *red one*, certainly might be a translation of the Dravidian term Śiva which has the same conception and also the worship of Śiva was prevalent among the mountain tribes of the South, long before the advent of the Aryans. The Aryans also transformed Korravai into Uma (உமை) or Pārvathi (பார்வதி) and made her the consort of Śiva and Kārtikēya their son.

Kārtikēya :

Kārtikēya, the God of War is one among the Vedic deities and popularly known as the son of Lord Śiva and Dēvi Uma, and is described as the miraculous babe, the wonderful hero, the commander-in-chief of the gods and the leader of the divine army.

There is a complex mythology which lies behind the iconographic form of Kārtikēya as six headed son of six mothers (Kārtikai maids) son of Gaṅga, son of Agni etc. He has the privilege of having representation on the early Indian coins, and occupies an important place. Besides this representation there are innumerable sculptures and bronze idols bearing his figures in different forms.

In early literature (Sanskrit) he is variously known as Kārtikēya, Skanda. Kumāra, Mahāsēna etc. He is called — Saravana-

bhava or Sarajanma for the myth that he was born among reeds, and his other names too will have some such explanations. Amarakōsam gives as many as seventeen names for Kārtikēya, but the list seems incomplete.

> Kārtikēyo Mahāsenaḥ Śarajanma Ṣaḍānanah
> Pārvatīnandanaḥ Skanda Sēnanir agnibhūḥ Guhaḥ
> Bāhuleyas Tārakajid Visūkhaḥ Śikhivāhanaḥ
> Ṣaṇmāturah Śaktidhara Kumāraḥ krauñcadharanaḥ.

Rig Vēda and Kumāra Sambava :

Kārtikēya is described as the commander-in-chief of the gods, who led the divine army against the forces of the mysterious Asuras to final victory. In Rig Veda his birth is symbolically described: A log of Araṇi wood split into two, they rub against each other and the fire produced was called Kumārah. Just as the same fire was capable of consuming the very log of wood which generated it, Kumārah became more powerful than his father, Śiva. Kumāra Samabava the immortal classic of the great poet, Kālidasa graphically describes the birth of Kārtikēya and concludes with the killing of Tārakāsura (தாரகாசுரன்) by the miraculous babe Kārtikēya. His mount is the beautiful peacock and the characteristic emblems Sakti (Vel), Kukuḍa (cock) and Sikhi (Peacock) are associated with him from the very early period.

Kārtikēya is shown as a two-armed god holding the right hand in abhaya mudra and the spear (vēl) in his left hand. Upendra Thakur is of opinion that the image of Kārtikēya in the standing posture, might have been derived from the standing Bodhisatva type in Kuṣana art.

> " An important inscribed image of Kārtikēya which was found some years ago in a well at Mathura shows that the mode of the Kārtikēya image was derived from the early standing Bodhisatva type in Kuṣana art."
>
> (East and West, Vol. 20, No. 3 and 4, page 301).

A very realistic specimen of Kārtikēya riding a peacock with its tail (Tōgai : தோகை) spread out in full circle is exhibited in Mathura museum. (Exhibit No. 466).

Coins of Kanishka:

It is significant that Patañjali makes a reference to the worship of Kārtikeya and this is supported by a few coins of Kanishka (I century A.D.) being the names of Skando, Komāro, Mahāsēno and Bizāgo in Greek letters. From these it may be assumed that the worship of Kārtikēya might have been prevalent in northern India during the time of Kuṣanas. A peculiar aspect of the coins and the sculptures depicted with various forms of Kārtikēya is that, that he was worshipped in different forms by the people at various places.

Though Kārtikēya figured among the Vēdic divinities, the formal worship of him entered the Hindu pantheon, only much later than the other divinities. He is not included in the list of the traditional principal gods (Śiva, Viṣṇu, Surya, Śakti and Ganapathy) and no separate cult had been developed around him, unlike as it was in the case of Ganapati and other gods. Patañjali mentions Kārtikēya as a folk divinity and Sūdraka had gone to the extent of passing remarks that Kārtikēya was the God *par excellence* of thieves and robbers, and these verdicts may require considerable examination at the present context.

Parallel Creation:

However, the worship of Kārtikēya in the name of Subrahmanya, gradually gained importance and attained the status almost of a National deity in the Gupta period. Though Kārtikēya is not in the list of traditional principal gods, numismatic evidence proves beyond doubt that his image or emblems were highly venerated by the people of ancient India. Even to-day it is said, that clay images of Kārtikēya are worshipped by the orthodox women of Bengal, who seek progeny, especially in the last day of the month of Kārtikai. Kārtikai and the Visāka days are considered to be the most sacred occasion for his worship. However it will not be out of place to observe here that the

complete episode of Kārtikēya alias Subrahmanya might have been a parallel creation of Aryans to that of Rama, who had destroyed Rākshasās with their King Rāvaṇa, with an aim to supersede the ancient and genuine Tamiḻ cult of Murugan, but alas! they had no other go but to embody the same in a new order. The following verse from Piṅkala Nikaṇḍu (பிங்கல நிகண்டு) by Piṅkala Muniver (பிங்கல முனிவர்) of the 10th century. A.D. may serve as the best testimony to the migration of Kārtikēya into Tamiḻnad and the admixture of Sanskrit words with Tamiḻ. It mentions as many as thirtyseven names for Murugan besides providing room for further additions.

Kumaran, Teiva Kuñchari Maṇāḷan,
Silamban, Murugan, Sēyē, Sevvēḷ,
Kaḍamban, Sāmi, Kārtikēyan,
Sēntan, Kuṟinchik Kiḻavan, Seṭṭi,
Kāṅgēyan, Gowri maintan, Kandan,
Vēlan, Vaḷḷi Kāḷvan, Visākan,
Tāra kāri, Gukan, Saravaṇa Bhavan,
Mayil vākananē, Vannip pook Kumaran,
Āṟiru Karatōn, Aritiru Marukan,
Kuḻakan, Gaṅkai maintan, Kunṟeṟintōn,
Aṟumeen Kātalan, Asurar tadintōn,
Sēvalank Kodiyōn, Dēva Sēnāpati,
Pāvaki, Āsān, Kalaiyaṟi Pulavan,
Aran Makan, Yānai mukavaṟku ilaiyōn,
Inaiya Aṟumugak Kadavuḷ Peyarē.

(Piṅkala Nikaṇḍu. 110)

குமரன், தெய்வ குஞ்சரி மணாளன்,
சிலம்பன், முருகன், சேயே, செவ்வேள்,
கடம்பன், சாமி, கார்த்திகேயன்,
சேந்தன், குறிஞ்சிக் கிழவன், செட்டி,
காங்கேயன், கௌரிமைந்தன், கந்தன்,
வேலன், வள்ளி கேள்வன், விசாகன்,
தாரகாரி, குகன், சரவண பவன்,
மயில்வா கனனே, வன்னிப்பூக் குமரன்,
ஆறிரு கரத்தோன், அரிதிரு மருகன்,

குழகன், கங்கை மைந்தன், குன்றெறிந்தோன்,
அறுமீன் காதலன், அசுரர் தடிந்தோன்,
சேவலங் கொடியோன், தேவ சேனாபதி,
பாவகி, ஆசான், கலையறி புலவன்,
அரன்மகன், யானை முகவற்கு இளையோன்,
இனைய அறுமுகக் கடவுள் பெயரே.

(பிங்கல நிகண்டு. *110*)

Transformation :

We have traced so far, the origin and development of the ancient Murugan cult in Tamiḻnād and the worship of Kārtikēya of the North. However it suffered a set-back at the hands of Vaishnavites and Aryans. The enthusiastic Vaishnavites had succeeded to some extent in their mission of transforming the seat of Murugan temple into a stronghold of Tirumāl temple. Tamiḻ tradition assures that Vēṅkaḍam (வேங்கடம்) was an abode of Murugan but to-day it is well known as Tiruppati (திருப்பதி) with Tirumāl as the presiding deity. In the same way, though Tirumurugarṛuppadai (திருமுருகாற்றுப்படை) and Tiruppugaḻ (திருப்புகழ்) speak of Paḻamudirsolai (பழமுதிர்சோலை) as the sacred abode of Murugan, now-a-days it is called as Aḻagarmalai (அழகர்மலை) with the presiding deity Tirumāl. In this connection the following needs a careful examination:

(1) Generally the temples dedicated to Tirumāl are not situated on hill-tops for the deity belongs to Mullai or the forest region, whereas Murugan the hill-god has many of his most sacred temples on hill-tops.

(2) Standing posture does not find favour with Tirumāl, for he is always described as "Sēsha Sayanan" (சேஷசயனன்) as seen at Tiruvaraṅgam (திருவரங்கம்: ஸ்ரீரங்கம்), Kīlarangam (கீழரங்கம்) and Ādiraṅgam (ஆதிரங்கம்) etc. whereas Kārṭikēya is found standing always.

(3) There is no tradition of Tirumāl, as the presiding deity, having two wives on both sides, but Subrahmanya is always depicted with his two consorts on either side.

New Relationship:

Before the advent of the Aryans, the worship of Murugan, Koṟṟavai, Tirumāl and Śiva were common among the Tamiḻs, and there was neither the orthodox Hinduism nor its offshoots Śaivism and Vaishnavism. However the faiths migrated into Tamiḻnād along with the Aryans. Orthodox Hinduism paid more attention to the practice of Vedic rituals and Yagnas than the real devotion to God. There were factions about the superiority of one God over another. Hinduism otherwise known as Vaitheeka cult had miserably failed to offer any real guidance to those seeking peace and consolation. Hence the orthodox Brahminical faiths had gradually lost hold of the mass. But the opposing Buddhism and Jainism gradually gained the support of the masses.

In the meanwhile the leaders of the Vaitheeka cult made an attempt to gain supremacy over their immediate rival faiths of Buddhism and Jainism by freely intermingling with the Tamilian cult. This was the only way open to them to get ascendency and gain support of the people, and finally to give a death blow to both Buddhism and Jainism.

To have this aim achieved, the Vaitheeka cult accepted the Tamiḻian deities of Koṟṟavai, Murugan, Śivan and Tirumāl and also created a new link and relations between their deities and the Tamiḻian deities. They called Murugan as Subrahamanya and created a Deivayānai to marry him in addition to his lover wife, Vaḷḷi. Śivan was renamed as Rudra and Liṅga worship of the Tamilians, which was once condemned by them was now accepted and worshipped by the Aryans as the supreme deity. Koṟṟavai was made as the dutiful wife of Śiva, however this is not accepted in Kerāḷa even to-day and they say that Koṟṟavai or Kāḷi as the younger sister of Śiva. It was said that Kāḷi, Koṟṟavai and Durgai were the various forms of Pārvati. Murugan with the name of Ārumugan was made known to be the younger son of Śiva and Pārvati. Tirumāl the Tamilian deity was interrelated with Viṣṇu the Aryan deity and created relationships and stories connecting him with Baladeva, Indra, Sūrya, Chandra and so on. Vināyagar or Piḷḷaiyār was perhaps their last created deity to Tamiḻnād.

Bakti Movement :

With the result of these changes and the sudden growth of Bhakti cult, which added new vigour to Hinduism, propagated by the four Śaiva Śaints, Tirunāvukkarasar (திருநாவுக்கரசர்) Tirugnānasambandar (திருஞானசம்பந்தர்), Sundaramoorthy (சுந்தரமூர்த்தி) and Mānickavāsagar (மாணிக்கவாசகர்), the Murugan cult lost its charm and individuality and Murugan became one of the minor deities. Due to the influence of the Bhakti movement, the worship of Śiva came to the fore-front and stemmed the popularity of Buddhism and Jainism to some extent. The three Śaiva Saints (Thēvāram Trio) moved from place to place followed by the devotees, singing the praise of Śiva. This gained momentum and the age long Murugan cult gradually lost supremacy and was thrust to the back-ground. Hence during the middle ages that is from seventh to thirteenth century, Murugan became insignificant and there was a lull prevalent in the worship of Murugan and hence there arose a need for the revival of the ancient Murugan cult.

St. Aruṇagirināthar :

Fifteenth century had witnessed a great change in the worship of Murugan in Tamiḻnād. A youth born at Tiruvannamalai (திருவண்ணாமலை) had turned into a staunch devotee of Murugan and began to propagate the faith in all possible ways, especially by his emotional extempore compositions in praise of Murugan. He travelled throughout the length and breadth of Tamiḻnād and Ceylon, visiting each and every place, village or town or hillock, where there was a sacred shrine consecrated to the Tamiḻ deity Murugan, singing his own compositions called Tiruppugaḻ, which was in praise of Murugan. Tiruppugaḻ attracted one and all, old and young alike by the formation of its peculiar and pleasant metre otherwise called 'Santham' (சந்தம்). It was very much pleasing to hear, besides creating devotion and inspiring enthusiasm for learning and reciting it regularly. But at the same time it was very troublesome and perplexing to compose such a song with equal spiritual merit and devotion. He was the founder author of such compositions having none other as his equal in that art. He himself was Saint Aruṇagirināthar.

Sixteen Thousands :

The tradition says that Aruṇagirināthar (அருணகிரிநாதர்) had composed sixteen thousand songs of Tiruppugaḻ whereas we are able to get only 1361 songs (according to Śaiva Siddhānta Samājam Edition, 1935) and a few more songs may be available from some other editions, and at any rate it cannot exceed fourteen hundred.

"Taḻuvu padinārāyiram Tiruppugaḻ enum
Tamiḻ mālai sāṟṟi yuruki
Siddhi peṟum Aruṇagirināthar."

(Tiruviriñchai Murugan Piḷḷai Tamiḻ, Siruparaip paruvam)

தழுபதி னாறு யிரந்திருப் புகழெனுந்
தமிழ்மாலை சாற்றி யுருகிச்
சித்தி பெறும் அருணகிரி நாதர்.

(திருவிரிஞ்சை முருகன் பிள்ளைத்தமிழ், சிறுபறைப் பருவம்)

"Aruṇagiri nātha naraintapati nārā
Yiraṅkavitai enṟulakil yārum—uraipukalum
Deivat Tiruppugaḻum."

(Thaṇigai Ulā)

அருணகிரி நாத னறைந்த பதி னாறு
யிரங்கவிதை யென்றுலகில் யாரும்—உரைபுகலும்
தெய்வத் திருப்புகழும்.

(தணிகையுலா)

This seems to be in accordance with the tradition of the number of Thēvārap padigams sung by Tirugnānasambandar otherwise called Āḷudaiya Piḷḷaiyar. It says that Āḷudaiya Piḷḷaiyar had sung sixteen thousand Thēvārap padigams, whereas we have only three hundred and eighty four padigams, inclusive of one padigam obtained from inscription and generally each padigam contains ten or eleven stanzas.

Patinārā yiram padigam
"Makaraṅkiḷar Kaḍal vaiyantuyarkeḍa vōymoḻinta
Nikaraṅ kilikalik Kāḻip pirān."

(Āḷudaiya Piḷḷaiyār Tiruvantāti. 15)

பதினுறு யிரம் பதிகம்
மகரங்கிளர் கடல் வையந் துயர்கெட வாய்மொழிந்த
நிகரங் கிலிகலிக் காழிப் பிரான்.

(ஆளுடைய பிள்ளையார் திருவந்தாதி. 15)

"Pachaip padikat tudan patinā rāyirampā
Vittup poruḷai viḷaikka valaperumān."

(Āḷuḍāiya Piḷḷaiyār Tiruttogai. 22 & 23)

பச்சைப் பதிகத் துடன் பதினு றுயிரம்பா
வித்துப் பொருளை விளைக்க வலபெருமான்

(ஆளுடைய பிள்ளையார் திருத்தொகை, 22 & 23)

Lord of Tamiḷs:

In those days the people who wanted consolation through religion were misguided and became confused. Due to the rise of rival factions in Hinduism and the decadence of true spirit, the worship of Kārtikēya lost popularity. The popularity of any particular cult mainly depended upon as much as on the spiritual stature of its chief protagonists, and hence the popularity of any cult was never stationary. The Bhakti movement propagated by the four Śaiva Saints, brought the Śiva cult to the fore-front and thus assigned a subordinate position to Murugan cult. So it was in need of revival and that was fulfilled by Aruṇagirināthar.

Aruṇagirināthar took up that mission because Murugan was his ancestral deity and also he was interested in that for the following reasons:

The public worship of Murugan was not the sole privilege of any particular priestly class. It did not require any particular set of rituals and observances. Murugan was not a tutelar diety of any particular class or community. The simplicity of worship with devotion, free from elaborate rituals, the cult attracted all. Beyond all these, Aruṇagirināthar chose Murugan as the Lord of Tamiḷs for He was more compassionate to the poor and destitute. He speaks in many places (songs) that all the divine gifts and the poesy which brought him name and fame were bestowed on him by Murugan himself.

General Theme:

He acquired the power of singing the extempore compositions of Tiruppugaḷ in praise of Murugan in different and difficult metres that is "Santham". All songs of Tiruppugaḷ portray highly voluptuous descriptions about prostitutes, of course accompanied by denunciation of their wiles and prayers to Murugan that one should not be lured by them. His songs are full of such descriptions side by side with devotional passages. For instance the first half of the song beginning with, "Sir Siṛakku mēni pasēl pasēlena" may be one of the best examples to illustrate this theme.

Sir siṛakku mēni pasēl pasēlena
Nūpu ratti nōsai kalir kalirena
Sēra viṭṭa tāḷkaḷ sevēl sevēlena —Varumānār
Sēka rattin vālai silōr silōrkaḷum
Nūru laksha kōdi Mayāl Mayālkoḍu
Tēdi okka vādi aiyō aiyōvena —maḍamātar
Mārpa ḍaitta kōḍu paḷir paḷirena
Ēma littennāvi pakir pakirena
Māma sakki lāsai ulōm ulōmena —ninaivōdi
Vāḍai paṛṛu vēḷai aḍā aḍāvena
Nima yakka mēdu solōy solōyena
Vāram vaitha tāḷgal idō idōvena —aruḷvāyē
(Tiruppugaḷ. 689)

சீர்சி றக்கு மேனி பசேல் பசேலென
நூபு ரத்தி னோசை கலிர் கலிரென
சேர விட்ட தாள்கள் செவேல் செவே லென —வருமானார்
சேக ரத்தின் வாலை சிலோர் சிலோர்களும்
நூறு லக்ஷ கோடி மயால் மயால் கொடு
தேடி ஒக்க வாடி ஐயோ ஐயோ வென —மடமாதர்
மார்ப டைத்த கோடு பளிர் பளிரென
ஏம லித்தெ னாவி பகிர் பகிரென
மாம சக்கி லாசை உளோம் உளோமென —நினைவோடி
வாடை பற்று வேளை அடா அடா வென
நீம யக்க மேது சொலாய் சொலாயென
வாரம் வைத்த தாள்கள் இதோ இதோ வென —அருள்வாயே
(திருப்புகழ். 689)

One may ask why Aruṇagirināthar should be so obsessed with and contemptuous of the wiles of harlots. He had condemned only the unholy acts of the immoral womenfolk, for their act amounted to the denial of divinity. If the physical aspect of human love is totally eschewed then the process of creation will cease. Hence Māṇickavāsagar said that Lord Śiva, who performs his Cosmic Dance in South, as a sign of love, had given the left half of his body to Goddess Pārvati; otherwise the vast population of men would do penance and the creation will cease.

" Tenpā lukantāḍum Tillaic chirrambalavan
Peṇpā lukantān perumpittan kāṇēdy!
Peṇpā lukantilanēl pētōy yiru nilattōr
Viṇpā liyōkeyti viduvarkāṇ chāḷalō.

(Tiruvāsagam. 263)

தென்பா லுகந்தாடும் தில்லைச்சிற் றம்பலவன்
பெண்பா லுகந்தான் பெரும்பித்தன் காணேடி!
பெண்பா லுகந்திலனேல் பேதாய் இரு நிலத்தோர்
விண்பா லியோகெய்தி விடுவர்காண் சாழலோ.

(திருவாசகம். 263)

Aruṇagirināthar as well as other Saints had understood and expressed the two distortions of human mind, namely, the animal passion and the fear of death which are the greatest obstacles in the way of attaining the heavenly bliss. Hence he wants that the love should have the divine aspect which will create great enjoyment and bliss than the love debased by sheer carnality.

During his time, generally the literatures began to project aesthetic as well as erotic attitudes towards human life. For instance, Lord Krishna was made to become a mundane hero and many stories of mirth and gay were woven around his early life in Gōkulam. The people indulged in sensuous life and this was reflected on the mode of literatures also. Being a spiritual giant, Aruṇagirināthar had been unequivocal in his condemnation such indulgences.

One may think that Aruṇagirināthar has used first person in all the passages, describing himself as a victim of lust, only

because he was suffering from those afflictions, but this will be a tragic mistake. For all the sages like the four Śaiva Saints, Paṭṭinathār (பட்டினத்தார்), Thāyumānavar (தாயுமானவர்) and Rāmalingar (இராமலிங்கர்) were in the habit of taking the sin of others on themselves and pray to God for their deliverance. The best sentiments expressed in literature of any language and the representation of the art have been centred round the attractions between the two sex, the central theme remaining some where in the background. However, the loftiness of thought and theme, the spiritual contents, the musical cadences and the inspirational qualities of his compositions cannot be easily surpassed by any one who comes across these compositions.

Pilgrimage:

It was a tradition in the olden days a devotee or a Saint to visit all the places of pilgrimage or sacred places along with his admirers. We hear that Tirunāvukkarasar popularly known as Appar went on his pilgrimage on foot, whereas Tirugnānasambandar, the youngest of the Thēvāram Trio went in a palanquin followed by a number of devotees of Śiva, who were called as Śivanadiyār (சிவனடியார்). They worshipped at every shrine on their pilgrimage and sang their own compositions (Thēvāram) in praise of the deity. In the same way Aruṇagirināthar too went on a pilgrimage to the sacred shrines of Murugan.

During the later period of Aruṇagirināthar, South India was liberated from the unholy grip of the Muslim domination by the kings of Vijayanagar. This was now much helpful to Aruṇagirināthar to have his pilgrimage to the sacred places of Murugan in a solitary and peaceful manner. He always dispraised himself and took his great spiritual attainments as insignificant, and hence he might have travelled from place to place on foot without much pomp but with simplicity in his manners. However in the later years, when the people began to understand his greatness, and to honour him greatly, many followed him as his sincere disciples. Aruṇagirināthar made an extensive tour through Tamilnād and Ceylon, and even to some of the North Indian towns sacred to Murugan.

Praṇava Upadēsa:

It seems that Aruṇagirināthar got his primary inspiration of spiritual experience at his home town Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. He says in one of his songs on Tiruvaṇṇāmalai:

Aruṇai nagarmisai Karuṇaiyo daruḷiya
Parama voru vasanamu miru saraṇamum maṟavēnē

(Tiruppugaḷ. 1070)

அருணை நகர்மிசை கருணையொ டருளிய
பரம வொருவச னமுமிரு சரணமும் மறவேனே.

(திருப்புகழ். 1070)

The term 'Vayalūrā (வயலூரா) occurs in many of his compositions. Vayalūr, which is sacred to Murugan and which gave him equal spiritual experience, seems to be important next to Tiruvaṇṇamalai.

The next important place he visited might be Chidambaram (சிதம்பரம்) where he says, that he got the "Praṇava Upadēsam." (பிரணவ உபதேசம்)

Etti raṇḍumaṟi yāta enseviyil
Etti raṇḍumitu vāmi lingamena
Etti raṇḍuveḷi yāmo ḷintaguru — Murugōnē.

(Tiruppugaḷ. 361)

எட்டி ரண்டுமறி யாத என் செவியில்
எட்டி ரண்டு மிது வாமி லிங்க மென
எட்டி ரண்டு வெளி யாமொ ழிந்த குரு-முருகோனே.

(திருப்புகழ். 361)

He had sung more than sixty songs in praise of the deity there.

First Publication:

More than this, Chidambaram deserves our admiration by an important event taken place in the history of Tiruppugaḷ songs. The tradition says that the Chola king, Raja Raja the Great, had obtained the palm leaf manuscripts of the Thēvāram Hymns sung by the Thēvāram Trio, from the temple here. In the same

8179 51

way Chidambaram showed the way for the revival of Tiruppugal songs from the oblivion.

In 1871, V. T. Subramaṇiya Piḷḷai working in the local court at Chidambaram first heard a Tiruppugaḷ song, which led to the collection of the manuscripts of Tiruppugaḷ songs and their subsequent publication. When he was listening to the arguments in a Civil Suit, a reference was made to a Tirruppugaḷ song relating to the rights of the priests of the Natarāja temple.

Vēda nūnmuṛai vaḷuvāmē tinam
Vēḷvi yāleḷil punaimū vāyira
Mēnmai Vētiyar mikavē pūsanai — purikōvē
(Tiruppugaḷ. 784)

வேத நூன்முறை வழுவாமே தினம்
வேள்வி யாலெழில் புனைமூவாயிர
மேன்மை வேதியர் மிகவே பூசனை-புரிகோவே.
(திருப்புகழ். 784)

He was very much attracted by the song and an intense desire was born in him to collect other songs as well. From that year he started collecting palm leaf manuscripts of Tiruppugaḷ available then, from various places and published the first volume of the compositions in 1895. Then his illustrious son, Thaṇikaimaṇi Dr. V. S. Chengalvaraya Piḷḷai took up and completed his father's mission in life by bringing out the whole songs available at present with notes and an analysis of the major themes.

Instructor God:

Aruṇagirināthar visited Swāmimalai (சுவாமிமலை) otherwise called Tiruvēragam (திருவேரகம்) where it is said that Subrahmaṇya taught 'Praṇava Mantra' (பிரணவ மந்திரம்) to his father 'Śiva' himself and thereby got the name of 'Instructor God'.

Chittira naḍamiḍu mādēvar tamatiru —sevimṛtā
Seppuka venamuna mōtāma luṇarvuṛu
Sirchuka paraveḷi itākum enavavar
Dakshana sevitani lēpōda maruḷiya —Gurunāthā
(Tiruppugaḷ. 275)

சித்திர நடமிடு மாதேவர் தமதிரு —செவிமீதே
செப்புக வெனமுன மோதாம லுணர்வுறு
சிற்சுக பரவெளி ஈதாகும எனவவர்
தெக்ஷிண செவிதனி லேபோத மருளிய —குருநாதர்

(திருப்புகழ். 275)

In his visit to Tiruchengōdu (திருச்செங்கோடு) he requested Murugan to appear before him whenever needed:

Senṛē yiṛaincha kandāvenmunbu
Senchēval koṇḍu varavēṇum.

(Tiruppugaḻ. 118)

சென்றே யிறைஞ்ச கந்தாவென் முன்பு
செஞ்சேவல் கொண்டு வரவேணும்

(திருப்புகழ். 118)

Praṇava Mantram :

At Paḻamudirsolari (பழமுதிர் சோலை), the present Aḻagarmalai (அழகர் மலை) he says that the Dancing peacock (Ādu Mayil) the mount of Murugan has the shape of 'Praṇava Mantram'.

Āna tani mantra rūpanilai koṇḍatu
Ādu mayilenba —tariyēnē

(Tiruppugaḻ. 1290)

ஆன தனி மந்த்ர ரூபநிலை கொண்டது
ஆடு மயி லென்ப —தறியேனே

(திருப்புகழ். 1290)

It may be said that the seed of Tiruppugaḻ was sown in Aruṇagirināthar at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, had been watered and manured at Vayalūr near Tiruchirāppaḷḷi (திருச்சிராப்பள்ளி), began to blossom flowers and bear fruits at Vaḷḷi Malai (வள்ளிமலை) near Vellore (வேலூர்).

It seems certain that he reached Ceylon and visited Katirkāmam (கதிர்காமம்), famous for its association with Murugan and sang a good number of songs in praise of the deity there. After visiting all sacred abodes of Murugan in South India he went upto Kasi (காசி) and finally returned to his home town Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, where he stayed till his end.

Conclusion :

After Nakkirar (நக்கீரர்) Aruṇagirināthar greatly propagated the Murugan cult throughout the country by singing his devotional and emotional compositions of Tiruppugaḻ songs. But after his time, his compositions and the worship of Murugan suffered a temporary set-back, Only after the great war (1914–1918) Tiruppugaḻ songs re-emerged from the oblivion as music that could be sung to the public audiences as prior to that they were in the tongues of few dēvadāsis. (Women who were dedicated for particular services to the deities at every Hindu temple, but at present the system has been totally abolished by legislature).

After Aruṇagirināthar, Kumaragurupara Aḍikal spread the Murugan cult with his own compositions. By his untiring and unceasing efforts, every forgotten and dilapidated shrine of Murugan was renovated and revived for worship and attracted thousands of devotees. The songs of Kavaḍiç çhintu (காவடிச் சிந்து) as equally emotional as Tiruppugaḻ by Annāmalai Reddiyār (அண்ணாமலை ரெட்டியார்) also had helped to some extent to the revival and retention of the worship of Murugan. At present Delhi, the capital city, is also proud of having a temple on a hillock consecrated to Subrahmanya, known as the "Uttara Swamimalai Temple" (உத்தர சுமாமிமலைக் கோயில்). Aruṇagirināthar contributed a great deal to rouse the spiritual fervour of the people. Hence the immense popularity of the worship of Murugan today rests on the solid foundations laid by the propagative works of Saint Aruṇagirināthar.

A NOTE ON KUḌIMIYĀMALAI MUSIC INSCRIPTION

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The music inscription occupying a space about 13'×14' engraved is on the slope of a rock in the Śikhānāthasvāmi temple at Kuḍimiyāmalai, District Pudukkottai.[1] The village also has a rock-cut shrine called Mēlaikkōvil. The present record is the complete music inscription of its kind, in the whole of India, barring the one at Tirumayyam.

It is engraved in the Pallava-Grantha characters of the 7th century A. D. The language of the inscription is Saṇskrit and the colophon at the end is written in Tamiḻ. The Saṇskrit portion begins with an invocation to Lord Śiva and runs in seven sections, arranged with sub-sections of sixteen sets of four *svaras* under proper heading. Altogether there are thirty-eight rows arranged in sixteen sets of four *svaras* (i. e., sixty-four *svaras* in all, in each row).

The epigraph attracted not only the attention of the scholars in South but also in North as well, since it was carved at the time when the bifurcation of Hindustani and Karnatic music was not prevalent. Once it was thought that the record was a treatise on musical notation[2] but actually it gives only the *sañcharas* of the seven *rāgas*,[3] *viz.*, *Madhyama*, *Shaḍja*, *Shaḍva*, *Sadharita*, *Pañchama*, *Kaisika-madhyama* and *Kaisiki*.

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1. Published in *E.I.*, xii, No. 28.
2. *Pudukkottai State Manual*, part 1, p. 557.
3. P. Sambamoorthy, *Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, Madras, 1973, p. 85 ff.

Its value:

The record stands as the earliest example of a recorded study in the history of World Music and is unique in many aspects. (i) The music belongs to the sphere of *Abhyāsa gāna* and is akin to *sarva-lāghu tānam;* (ii) The selection of the *Madhyama grāma* as the first *rāga* indicates that it was in the *suddha* scale of ancient Tamiḻ music; (iii) suggestion of some of the *mēlakartas* that have become popular after the advent of 72 *mēlakartas*; (iv) The use of 22 *śrutis* instead of 28; (v) Most of the *rāgas* of the inscription are met with in the *Dēvārappaṉ* of the 7th–8th century A.D.

The Sanskrit label at the beginning suggests that it was formulated for the benefit of learners by the king who was a staunch Māhēśvara and disciple of Rudrāchārya. The colophon at the end written in Tamiḻ has been read originally as "[E] ṭṭiṟukum [E] ḻiṟkum ivai uriyavai" and interpreted as (a) this particular type of music is for 8 and 7 stringed instruments: (b) for eight and seven *karaṇas* in *yāḷ*-playing[4]: (c) the *svaras* mentioned in all the seven sections would apply to the eighth *rāga* or that the *svaras* mentioned in the seventh section under the seventh *rāga* would also apply to the eighth *rāga*[5] and (d) the music can be rendered in the *tāla* taking 8 *mātras* for an *āvarta* or in the *tāla* taking 7 *mātras* for an *āvarta*[6]

But recently it has been rightly suggested and correctly interpreted by K. R. Srinivasan as the colophon stands for: "[Pā] ṭṭiṟkum [yā]ḻiṟkum ivai uriyavai"[7] meaning that the particular type of music (*rāga*) is suitable both for vocal and stringed instrument (*Yāḷ*). A little to the north of this epigraph is engraved the label "Parivādinī-e" indicating a lute with seven strings only. The *Amarakōśa* denotes "*Parivādini*" as a *viṇa* with seven

4. S. Ramanathan, 'Music from Inscription' *Seminar in Inscriptions*, 1966, p. 32 ff.

5. T. N. Ramachandran, '*The Royal Artist Mahēndravarman*' *JOR.*, vii. p. 29 ff.

6. P. Sambamoorthy, *Op. cit.*, p. 89.

7. K. R. Srinivasan, *Damilica*, 1970, p. 83 ff.

strings (*saptabhiḥ parivādini*) and in Tamiḻ works also it is referred to and corresponds to "*Seṅkōṭṭuyāḻ*"[8] This type of *vina*, *viz*., 'Parivādini' may possibly be the same as the one represented in the sculptures at Belur and Halebid.

Authorship :

Though the record does not mention the name of the king, a general feeling among scholars is that it may be ascribed to the Pallavas. However, it has been attributed to the Irukkuvēḷs of Koḍumbāḷūr.[9] A recent view is that the cave temple had Pāṇḍya affiliation and excavated in about A. D. 750.[10] With available information it is more plausible to attribute this epigraph to the Pallavas of Kāñchi, than to the any other known dynasties of that period. This record has been assigned to the 7th century A. D. on scriptal ground. Firstly, we have not come across any inscriptions of the Pāṇḍyas, Irukkuvēḷs etc., of that period written in Pallava-Grantha characters, barring the one at Nāmakkal which is certainly attributed to the Adigamāns. The contemporary dynasties used ordinary Grantha for Sanskrit, either Vaṭṭeḻuttu or Tamiḻ for Tamiḻ language. Secondly, it appears that no other dynasty but the Pallavas seems to have developed such a high taste in fine arts. The Pallava king who had distinction in the realm of literature, drama and fine arts of that period was none else than Mahēndravarman I. One of his titles is *Saṅkirṇajāti* meaning "expert in the art of (singing or composing) of mixed *rāgas*." His Māmaṇḍūr inscription states that 'he wanted to achieve what was not achieved by others in the realm of music' and the term *varṇa chaturthaha*[12] (sweetness of

8. Jivakaçintāmaṇi (edited by U. V, Swaminatha Iyer) v. 603 Makarayāḻ 19 strings; Pēriyāḻ 21 strings; Sakōṭayāḻ 14 strings; Śeṅgōṭṭuyāḻ 7 strings. "Pēriyāḻ piṇṇu Makaraā Cnakōṭa muḷaṉ śirpoḷiyuḍ—Śeṅgōṭu Śeppiṉār (Silambu. 3 : 26).

9. K. R. Venkataraman, 'A note on Sittannavāsal and Kuḍimiyāmalai monuments' *TASSI.*, 1956-57, p. 91.

10. K. R. Srinivasan, *Op. cit.*

11. *S.I.I.*, xii. Nos. 8 and 13.

12. *Ibid.*, iv. No. 136.

voice and merit of composition) further strengthen the view regarding the identification and author of the inscription. The *guru* Rudrāchārya mentioned in the record has been identified with Rudraṭa, the author of '*Sriṅgāratilaka* and *Kāvyalaṁkāra*, a contemporary of Mahēndravarman I.[13]

The identification of the king with Pallava Mahēndravarman I is only tentative and suggestive. Whoever may be the author, it is evident from the record that it was author's ambition to invent a new music system which would be applicable both for stringed instrument and vocal as well. It stands as a technical exercise to develop the finger technique on *vina*. The music reminds of the ancient *alaṅkāras* of a particular pattern and agrees more with the *Nāradasiksha* than with the *Saṅgitaratnākara* of Sāraṅgadēva.[14] All these vouchsafe the author's high calibre and skill in music and is rightly mentioned as "the father of South Indian Music."

13. T. N. Ramachandran, *Op. cit.*

14. *Ibid., Op. cit.*

SOCIAL LIFE OF GYPSIES IN TAMIL NĀḌU

BY

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Gypsies in Tamil Nāḍu are ancient and nomadic people and found in many parts of Tamil Nāḍu. They are known by various names. Gypsies bore names typically of the place where they were born, and hence they have peculiar names. They are popularly called 'Kurivikāran' or 'Narikoravan' in Tamil Nāḍu. There is a general agreement that the Gypsies originated in India and moved to various places of the world. "In fact their history, accumulated through the medium of their spoken language can be traced back to India, where, in all probability they originated."[1] "The gypsies may be defined as an ethnic minority with a number of inherited physical features and a distinctive language related to Sanskrit. They are believed to have their origin in north-west India and have resided in Europe since the middle age"[2]

A great deal has been written on the subject of gypsies but the writers have never observed their social life systematically. Gypsies are associated with a gay life, but their real life is not so. They sing songs, probably because they wanted to forget their miseries. They are considered to be unwanted elements of the societies, but many failed to understand their tribal life. Gypsies are not having any written language of their own. Their language is changed or corrupted because they are nomads. They move from one place to another partly to gather food and partly due

1. "Gypsies"—*Encyclopaedia of Britannica* vol. 12, ~~1963, p. 1076.~~

2. John Takman, *The Gypsies in Sweden: A Socio-Medical Study, Liberforlerg, Stockholm,* 1976 p. 9.

to their nomadic quality. They assemble together at moon-light to sing songs and for dance,

Gypsies are short, black and having keen black eyes. Gypsies always live in a group and move to various places as a group. Each group has its own leader whose position is not determined by heredity but according to his physical strength. The leader is considered to be a teacher, a doctor, a judge and a starman. He is called "Kurun Matto." The leader plays a dominant role at the time of festival. The leader acts like a Justice of Peace, and imposes fine on guilty people. Fine is levied in kind.[3] Women are generally active and quarrelsome. They have dominant character over their male members. Women fight more vigorously than men. Uncontrolled and bad women were chased away from their group and in some cases, male gypsies cut those women's hair.[4]

The marriage system of gypsies varies from place to place The marriage institution changes slowly compared to other social institutions in all societies. This must have been the case with the gypsies. We notice very little change in their marriage institution. The bride is selected from their own group, partly to preserve their social and cultural homogenity and partly due to their cultural barriers. The custom of bride-price is still prevalent among them. Anthropologists agree that the primary function of a bride-price or bride wealth is that of providing an additional economic benefit to reinforce the stability of marriage (Murdock 1950 and Jacobs and Stern, 1952). Bride-price is, either in kind or cash, paid by the kin of groom to the kin of bride because the groom is getting additional hands of bride. "The custom of bride purchase was universal. As late as 1955, I and other members of the team were guests at a gypsy wedding where the teenage bride had not seen her husband until the day of the marriage ceremony. The price rumoured to be either two or four thousand kronar (U.S. $ 400

3. Pilo Hirudhayanath, *Adivasigal*, Kalaimagal Kariyalayam, Madras, 1961.

4. *Ibid.*

or $ 800), was paid by the groom's father".[5] Pilo Hirudhayanath also observed the same practice among gypsies. He estimated that a sum of rupees 400 to 500 is paid for a fair or beautiful bride. The gypsy groom never ties a golden or silver, "*Thāli*", but ties a beaded necklace. The beaded necklace consists of ten black beads and ten red beads representing ten goddesses. They offer prayers to Madurai Meenākshi and godess Kāḷi the previous day of the marriage.[6]

Gypsies are fond of their children and give special care to female children. They like bright colours particularly thick red dresses. The male members are half-naked and always wear red turban. Women expose most parts of their body. Usually their dress is dirty and unclean. They rarely bathe and brush their teeth but apply black powder to the teeth periodically, "to kill worms". Tattooing of girls is an art specialized by female gypsies. They engrave various figures on their skin. The gypsies are very strict in their discipline. The female members return their respective tents before the sun sets. "Those who have a married life are so careful in their conduct that if they do not return from their expeditions before the first cry of the jackal is heard in the evening, they are subject to severe punishment and, intrigue with a stranger to the tribe, involves immediate expulsion."

The gypsies are parasites. They do no do any hard work. A place where there is much to eat is considered to be a paradise for them. They cook their food over an open fire, The food is made up of rice, small animals, and birds. They often live by begging and on left-over food in functions. A marriage house is a paradise for them. Both men and women have a great weakness for alcohol and sometimes get drunk. They prepare their beverage for social purpose at the time of festivals.

They easily get angry and laugh. They always tell lies partly for fun and partly to guard their secrets from outsiders. They

5. *op. cit.*

6. Pilo Hirudhayanath, "Kadukodutha Veedu", Kalaimagal Kariyalayam, Madras, 1965.

tell lies even for minor things which they are particularly anxious to keep others in ignorance. They have never had any distinct cultures like music and paintings of their own. "They have little idea of time, proportion or measurement and, are superstitious about child birth, fertility, food and sickness. Their tribal custom sometimes have the force of law. Believing in charms and curses. They admit the falsity of their fortune telling. They betray little shame, curiosity, surprise, or grief and show no solidarity."[7]

Illiteracy is very great among gypsies. This is due to their nomadic character. Their children are not in a position to receive education due to the nomadic way of life. Under such general conditions their children are denied school education. Many gypsy parents said that they had tried their best to get their children admitted to school. "Various reasons had been given for not admitting them, viz. the children were not "suitable", the classes were already full, they had never had any gypsy children in the school before, etc."

Gypsies jealously guard their culture, customs and traditions. They go to various places and get acquainted with new life and new customs, but they have successfully resisted complete assimilation. They have retained a substantial part of their original language and, culturally and socially. They have remained a foreign people in the midst of population in which they have lived. They have their own customs, traditions, social organisation and on the whole, they have a unique life because they wanted to preserve their own tribal and cultural life without being corrupted by the modern life. At one extreme, there are tribals who are well advanced and on the other, there are those who are still leading a very primitive life bearing no relation to the progress made by the rest of the countrymen in various spheres of life.

7. W. Crooke, *Natives of Northern India*, 2nd Edn. Archibald Constable and Coy. Ltd., London 1907, p. 145.

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GAṆAPATI IN PAÑCADEVOPĀSANĀ

BY

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One of the salient features of our Indian culture is that it finds diversity in unity and discovers unity in diversity. Our ancient seers and prophets were quite conversant with the idea of the unity in the Divinity—"The Absolute-One", manifested through various names and forms. In the most ancient period of human history, the Ṛgvedic-prophets were familiar with the 'One Ultimate-Reality'—the 'Absolute Truth', who is the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer of the entire universe, and who regulates and governs it in a perfect harmony. The Ṛgvedic people knew it well that 'the Ultimate-Truth' is one but the men of wisdom call Him by different names.[1]

Śrīmad Bhāgavata, a great philosophical and a spiritually sacred text, also endorses the same belief when it says that the Lord of the entire universe is one and the same Reality, who is known by different names as Brahman, Bhagavān, Īśvara, Paramātmā, etc.[2] The Vedic philosophers believed that the divinity is one but people have been worshipping Him by different names like Indra, Mitra, Varūṇa, Agni, etc.[3] The Ṛgveda very clearly says that the 'Truth' is one.[4]

1. *Ṛgveda,* 1-164-46—"Indran Mitran Varuṇamāgni Mahuratho Divyaḥ Sa Suparṇo Gurutmān.
   Aikan sad Viprā bahudhāvapantyāgnin Yaman mata rīśvanamāhuḥ".
2. *Ibid.,* Loc. cit. "Aikamevādvitiyam".
3. cf. *Ṛgveda,* 1-164-46; 8-58-1; 10-129-2.
4. cf. *Ibid.,* 3-39.5; 4-54-4; 8-45-27; etc.

At the Mahābhārata-age,[5] in the Paurāṇika-era,[6] and in the later periods when many cults and sects associated with Śiva, Gaṇeśa and Viṣṇu were prevalent,[7] almost all the Hindus were quite conscious of one God with different names and epithets.

But according to Saṁskāras (the collections of the reactions of one's actions) as the dominating propensities and natures of human beings differ much from one another,[8] to satisfy the curiosities about God and to worship the God to one's own liking with different choice and speculations, there arose the necessity of the 'plurality of Divinity' and the multitude of the Deities; and thus ultimately it gave birth to the concept of gods and goddesses. Through these gods and goddesses people have been worshipping the different aspects and forms of the same formless and the Absolute-one, in different ways.

The Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad believes that 'He' is Brahmā, Śiva, Hari, Indra, Akshara and Ultimate-power.[9] We have already come to know the same fact revealed by the Ṛgvedic Ṛṣis.[10] The Maitrāyāṇī Saṁhitā also corroborates the same fact when it says that all the gods and goddesses are nothing but the various aspects (forms) of the same formless Brahman—the Ultimate Reality.[11] The Ṛgvedic seer expresses this fact more explicitely when he says that one and the same God is the main centre of innumerable powers and the unfathamable ocean of infinite activities. Though

5. (a) cf. *Mahābhārata*, Vana Parva, 39-76-77.
(b) cf. *Ibid*, Śānti Parva, 343-131.

6. (a) cf. *Brahma Purāṇa* 192-51.
(b) cf. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, 5-18-50.
(c) cf. *Harivaṁsa* (Viṣṇu Purāṇa), 25-31, etc.

7. cf. Kālidāsa's *Kumārasaṁbhava*, 7-44.

8. *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā*, 3-33.
"Prakṛtin yānti bhūtāni nigraha kin kariṣyati".

9. *Mahānārayaṇopaniṣad*, 3-1.
"Sa Brahmā sa Śivaḥ sa Hariḥ sa Indraḥ so aksharaḥ Paramaḥ Svarāṭ"

10. cf. *Ṛgveda* 1-164-46.

11. *Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad*, 4-6.
"Brahmaṇo Vāvaitā aanyastanavaḥ Parasyāmṛta syāśarīrasya Brahma Khalvidan Vāva Sarvam".

he is without name and form, yet he has infinite forms and innumerable names, and according to the aims, desires and ambitions of the devotees the same One is being worshipped in many ways and different forms.[12] The famous philosopher king, Bhartṛhari, in his *Vairāgyaśataka*, believes that the Supreme Lord is one and it matters little whether you call Him Śiva or Keśava.[13] The Niruktakāra clearly speaks of the same fact when he says that all these gods and goddesses are nothing but the different parts of one and the same God, and the very source of the infinite powers of the deities is the same.[14] In a well-known religious text, the same sublime idea is expressed when it says that Śrī Hari (who is the Lord of the three worlds) is worshipped by the Śaivas in the form of Śiva; by the Vedantins in the form of Brahman; by the Buddhists in the form of Buddha; by the Naiyāyikās in the form of creator; and the followers of Jainism worshipped Him in the form of Arhat.[15] Ādi Śaṅkarācārya gives expression to the same truth when he says that though God is omnipresent yet seated in the ājñācakra, He inspires and controls the activities of jīvātmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Gaṇapati—sitting in the lower plexus of the human body. Moreover, as described in the vedas, He is Sākshī (the witnessing-Entity), Nirguṇa (above the Bends of Māyā), full of Bliss, and the Supreme-one.[16]

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12. *Ṛgveda*, 5-62-2.
"Ṛtena ṛtuma pibitan dhruvan vān suryasya yatra vimu añctyaśvana. Daśa śatā saha tasthustedakan devānan sreṣṭhan vāyuṣām paśyam".

13. Mark a famous saying from the *Vairāgyaśataka* of Śrī Bhartṛhari—
"Aiko devaḥ Keśavo vā Śivo Vā".

14. The following verse is important to be noted here:—
Aikasyātmanoanye devāḥ pratyaṅgani bhavanti.

15. *Hanumannāṭaka*, 1-3.
"Yan Śaivāh samupāsate Śiva iti brahmeti Vedāntino.
Bauddhā Buddha iti pramāṇapaṭavaḥ karteti naiyāyikāḥ.
Arhanni, tyatha Jaina śāsanaratah karmaiti mimānsakāḥ.
Soayan vo Vidadhātu Vañchita Phalantrailokyanāṭhoharih.

16. *Ānandagiri's Śaṅkarācārya*, Madras University, Philosophy series, p. 84.
"Paramātmā Sarvagatoapyājñā cakravāsi bhūtvā Svādhaṣṭhajīva Rudra Viṣṇu Brahma Gaṇapatin Tattadviyogeṣu preryitvā svayan Sākshī nirguṇaḥ Sacidānandamayaḥ sarvātītaḥ Sarvotkṛṣṭa iti samyagvedeṣu pratipāditaḥ".

Not only the simple religious minded people but even the monists (believing in one Reality) like Śaṅkarācārya (the greatest champion of Monism) also worshipped the different gods and goddesses as the various aspects of the same Almighty.[17] The Rāmapūrvatāpanī Upaniṣad also believes that the various gods are nothing but the different forms of the same God who manifests Himself in many forms for bestowing the desired objects to His devotees.[18] Though Goswāmī Tulsīdāsa opines that the Nirguṇa form of the Lord is easy to be approached than the Saguṇa one,[19] because of the excess of some particular element in the body of human beings which shapes the nature of the persons,[20] men prefer to propitiate the God of their choice.

Though as many men so many gods, yet the Indian mythology speaks of thirty three crores of gods and goddesses, but there are five main dominating gods in the Hindu Pantheon who have been collectively worshipped by the religious minded populace of India. These five main deities, popularly known as Pañçadeva or Pañçadevatās, are Gaṇapati, Śiva, Sūrya, Śakti (Durgā) and Viṣṇu, who have been worshipped enthusiastically with full devotion since very hoary past. The collective worship of this five main Deities, i.e. Gaṇapati, Śiva, Sūrya, Śakti and Viṣṇu is popularly known as Pañçopāsanā or Pañcadevopāsanā or Pañçāyastana Pūjā. These five gods are the five Saguṇa forms of the Almighty[21] and this Pañçadevopāsanā is also based on the principle of the Pañçabhautika (with five basic elements) world, where these five deities represent the five elements, i.e., Śiva (Īśa) stands for Kshiti (earth) and

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17. B. R. Sharma, Ādiśaṅkarācārya–the Greatest Champion of Monism and His obeisance to Gaṇapati, *Journal of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.*

18. *Rāma-Pūrva-tāpini Upanisad*, 7.
"Upāsakānān Kāryārtha brahmaṇe rūpakalpanā".

19. Goswāmī Tulsīdāsa, *Rāmacarita Mānasa*, 7-33.
"Nirguṇarūpa sulabha ati saguṇa na jānbin Koi. Sugama Agama nāna carita suni mani bhrahma hoi".

20; *Ṛgveda*, 10-7-7.
"Akshaṇvantaḥ Karṇvantaḥ skhāyo manojaveṣvasabhābabhūvaḥ".

21. Let us mark the following verse in this context.
"Upāskānan pañcavidhin brahmopāsanāmevatat".

Gaṇapati represents Ap (Water); Teja (fire) is denoted by Śakti (Durgā) and the representative of vāyu (air) is Sūrya, while Viṣṇu symbolises vyom (ether).[22] The combined worship of these five deities (Pañçadevopāsanā) does indicate adequately the synthetic approach prevalent in the religious domain since very ancient times. In the collective worship of these five sectarian gods, the followers of these sects provide the primary place to their main deity, e g., the Śaivaites would attach the main importance to Śiva, the Gāṇapatyas to Gaṇapati and the Vaiṣṇavas to Viṣṇu, and so on and assigning the secondary importance to the rest of the four deities. For 'the votaries of Sanātana-Dharma, the Pañça-devopāsanā is an imperative one before the performance of any religious ceremony—whether pertaining to the gods or forefathers, though the performer may belong to any sect, i.e., Śaiva, Śākta, Gaṇapatya, Saura or Vaiṣṇava.

Here in the context of Pañçadevopāsanā, it would be quite important to note in detail the Pañçāyatana Pūja ceremony. The five sectarian gods worshipped together, are represented through five stones instead of their images. The Saligrāma (blackstone) symbolises Viṣṇu, a white stone of vague combination of hues denotes Śakti, and a crystal stands for Sūrya. The five stones (representing different gods) are well arranged on a circular metal disc, and the stone representing the Deity to whom the devotee wants to pay special homage, is given the central position. The following objects, used for the worship and at the same considered worthy to be worshipped, are kept by the side of the devotee—the performer of Pañçāyatana Pūjā,—Abhisheka Pātra, a conch-shell; a small hand-bell, a plate containing Tulsī leaves (sacred to Viṣṇu), Bilva leaves (sacred to Śiva), perfumes, flowers and fruits. Before the commencement of the regular ceremony, the worshipper performs the preliminary rite of "Ācamana" (which is common to all Hindu forms of ceremonial worship) which is a purificatary rite. The Ācamana rite consists of sipping and 'swallowing it twice or thrice and, the twenty four names Viṣṇu are repeated

22. Mark the following verse from the *Kapilatantra*—"Ākāśasyādhipo viṣṇu-rgṇeścaiva Maheśvari Vāyoḥ Sūryaḥ Kṣhitirīśo Jivanasya Gaṇādhipaḥ".

during this process. Homage is paid to the water vessel, to the conch and the bell, While paying homage to the bell the devotee addresses it in the following way:—

"O bell, make a sound for the approach of the gods, and for the departure of the demons; Homage to the goddess Ghaṇṭā (bell). I offer perfumes, grains of rice, and flowers, in token of rendering all due homage to the bell".

The regular ceremony of Pañçīyatana Pūjā has sixteen stages: 1. Āvāhana (invocation); 2. Āsana (offering of seat for the gods to sit down); 3. Pādya (offering of water for washing the feet); 4. Arghya (offering of rice, etc.); 5. Ācamaniya (offering of water for sipping); 6. Snāna (offering of milk and honey for the gods to bath in); 7. Vastra (offering of clothes represented by Tulsī leaves); 8. Upavastra (offering of upper garments and ornaments represented by more Tulsī leaves); 9. Gandha or çandana (offering of perfumes and sandal paste); 10. Puṣpa (offering flowers); 11. Dhūpa (offering of incense); 12. Dīpa (illumination); 13. Naivedya (offering of food); 14. Pradakhṣiṇā (reverential circum-ambulation); 15. Mantra Puṣpa (offering of flowers with recitation of texts); and 16. Namaskāra (final adoration). During each act the worshipper recites one of the sixteen verses of the Puruṣa Sūkta (hymn) of the Ṛgveda. The Pañçayatana Pūjā ceremony is concluded by offering the devotional obeisance with the recitation of the following prayer: "Veneration to the Infinite and Eternal Male (Puruṣa) who has thousands of names, thousands of forms, thousands of feet, thousands of eyes, thousands of heads, thousands of theighs, thousands of arms, and who lives for ten million ages".

"O Great God, pardon any want of knowledge of the right way of worshipping thee. Sin, misery and poverty are removed, happiness and purity are obtained by thy presence. O Great God, I commit thousands of faults every day and night, forgive me as I am thy servant. There is no other protection but from thee, thou only art my refuge; guard me therefore, and defend me by thy mercy; pardon my mistakes and defects in syllable, words, and measures, O Mighty Lord, be propitiated. I offer flowers with

prayers. Let the five gods, of whom great Viṣṇu is the first, be pleased with the worship I have made. Let all this be offered to the Supreme-Being. I offer thee with my mouth, O Viṣṇu, the sacred salutation *vashat*. Be pleased, O Sipivishṭa, with my oblations; let my songs of praise exalt thee; protect us ever with thy blessings".

This is the form of the Pañçīyatana Pūjā (Pançadevopāsanā) performed throughout the entire Indian subcontinent, especially in Maharaṣtra. The ceremony may have some minor alternations and mnior variations, for instance, the substitution of the appropriate images for the five stones, etc. The Pañçīyatana Pūjā, much in vogue even now in almost all parts of India, is also known at some places as Thākura Pūjā.

This entire creation (the universe) is simply the combination of the five fundamental elements (known as Pañçamahābhūtas) i.e., Ākāśa (ether) vāyu (air), Agni (fire), Jala (water), and Kshiti (earth); and the five elements are produced by the three guṇas of Prakṛti (the three modes of the operative Principle). Ākāśa is the pure form of Sattva guṇa; Agni is the pure form of Rajo guṇa, and Pṛthvī (Kshiti) is the pure form of Tamo guṇa, while Vāyu is produced by the combination of Sattva guṇa and Rajo guṇa, and Jala (water) is the resultant, produced by the blending of Rajo guṇa and Tamo guṇa. And we have seen that these five fundamental elements are represented by the five great sectarian gods, i.e., Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Śakti and Sūrya.

Gaṇapati, one of the most popular gods in the Hindu Pantheon,[23] occupies a very significant place in the most celebrated religious system Pancadevopāsanā. Gaṇapati has been worshipped as Vighneśa (the lord of obstacles),[24] Buddhividhātā (the God of wisdom and the Lord of learning); Maṅgaladātā and Siddhidātā (the Giver of welfare and auspicious things; and the Bestower of

23. *Vide*, B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati-Vināyaka, *Kadambini*, September, 1975, pp. 42-45, New Delhi.

24. B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati worshipped As Vighneśa, *Journal of Indian History*, vol. LV, No. 1, Trivandrum.

success and achievements) since very hoary past. He enjoys such a prominent position in the Indian cultural domain that this Deity is invoked before the commencement of every undertaking—whether religious, semi-religious, commercial or social. Gajānana (the elephant-faced god Gaṇapati) has been worshipped by the Gāṇapatyas (the exclusive worshippers of Gaṇapati) as the creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the entire Universe; and to them Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are nothing but the three main aspects of Mahāgaṇapati.[25] Gaṇapati, who has also been worshipped as Paramabrahman (the Ultimate-Reality),[26] did not confine to the Gāṇapatyas alone but he successfully intruded the boundaries of some other religious systems too, i.e., Jainism,[27] Buddhism'[28] Śaivism, Viṣṇavism, etc., where he was ardently adored even by the devout followers of these religious. Not satisfied within the limits of the Indian sub-continent alone, the Gaṇapati-worship also reached in the foreign lands, i.e., Sri Laṅka, Nēpal, Tibet, Jāva, Bāli, Borneo, China, and Japan, where he was enthusiastically propitiated both by the Hindus and Buddhists[29], [30]. The worship of Gaṇapati was prevalent in Iran (a plate, with Gaṇapati represented on it, has been discovered at Luristan, and the archaeologists have dated it between the period of 12C0 B.C. to 10C0 B.C.)[31] and Afghanistan,[32] in the most ancient periods of history. Gaṇapati-Vināyaka also entered in the Europeon territories, as the Roman-god Janus has got a very great resemblance with our

25. cf. Ānandatīrtha's *Śaṅkaradigvijaya,* p. 1C6. ff.

26. B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati worshipped As Paramabrahman,' *Journal of the Oriental Institute of M. S. University* Baroda, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, 1976,

27. Vide, B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati in Jainism, *Dilip* July/August, 1975. Bombay, pp. 29-34.

28. B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati in Buddhism, *Bulletion of the School of Oriental And African Studies, University of London,* London, England.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Vide, Alice Getty, *Gaṇeśa,* 1971 ed., pp. 24-67.

31. Vide, Vanden Berghe's article published in *Barraslhaye-Tarikhi* (Historical Studies of Iran), August/September, 1970, Iran.

32. cf. Aurel Stein, *Ancient Khotan,* pp. 251, 431.

Gaṇeśa.[33] Not content with this, our elephant-faced god Gaṇapati crossing the oceans encroached the boundaries of the American continent too, as the recent excavations at Mexico and Central America speak of the prevalence of the Gaṇapati-worship in the United states of America.[34] The Vedic people were quite conversant with Gaṇapati-worship[35] and the Upaniṣadic philosophers were also familiar with the mysterious god Danti (Gaṇapati).[36] Alike, the mystic prayer found in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, some other Gāyatrī-Mantras of Gaṇapati are also found, which were employed for the worship of this Deity.[37] Gaṇapati was also known to the people of the Mahābhārata-age, the Smṛti=Kāras could not dare to ignore mentioning Gaṇapati-worship,[38] but it was only in the Paurāṇika-era that the Gaṇapati-worship got the fullest expression and enjoyed the greatest popularity.[39] Gaṇapati, directly or indirectly, has been worshipped by almost all people throughout the length and the breadth of the Indian sub-continent as, many of his sacred places are found in almost all parts of the country,[40] but he was the most favourite Deity of the poets[41] and the yogīs.[42]

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33. cf. Edward Moor, *Hindu Pantheon*, p. 98.
34. Out of the 3000 images excavated from Mexico and Central America, the images of Gaṇapati are also found.
35. cf. *Ṛgveda*, 2-23-1.
36. cf. *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, 10-1.
37. B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati-worship through the Gāyatrī Mantra, *Bhavan's Journal*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.
38. *Vide*, B. R. Sharma, The Nature of the worship of Gaṇapati in the Smṛtis, *Kurūkshetra University Research Journal*, Kurukshetra, 1975.
39. Almost all the Purāṇas speak very high of Gaṇapati worship.
40. *Vide*, B. R. Sharma Gaṇapati And His Most Sacred places for Pilgrimage in India, *Bhavan's Journal*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, August, 1975, Bombay, pp. 17-27.
41. B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati in the world of Indian Poetry, *Hindustani*, Hindustani Academy, Allahabad, 1976.
42. (a) B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati in the Domain of Yoga, *Bharata Manisha*, November/January, 1976, Varanasi, pp. 27-36.

    (b) Vide, B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati-Vināyaka: The Most Favourite Deity of the yogīs *Saraswati*, August/December, 1975, Lucknow, pp. 85-88.

Gaṇapati-vināyaka, who is one of the five great gods in the Pañcadevopāsanā, occupies an exalted position in the Pañcāyatana Pūjā. A very great importance has been attached to the worship of Gaṇapati by the worshippers of Pañcādevas (the five great sectarian gods). The Śāstras have directed the worshippers of Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, and Sūrya to propitiate Gaṇapati even before the worship of their most favourite deities. A verse from the *Brahmāṇda Purāṇa* is important to be noted regarding this fact.[43] The *Gaṇeśa Purāṇa* does testify the same fact while describing the significance of the Gaṇapati-worship in Pañcādevopāsanā, where Lord Śiva, on the occasion of killing the Tripurāsura, says that the Śaivas, the Vaiṣṇavas, the Sauras and the Śāktas should worship the god Gaṇapati before the commencement of every activity.[44] The *Devībhāgavata Purāṇa* while speaking of Pañcādevopāsanā, informs us that Gaṇapati was one of the very important gods propitiated in Pañcādevopāsanā,[45] We are told by the author of the *Garūda Purāṇa* that in the very beginning of this text Gaṇapati was also invoked alongwith Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Śiva and Sarasvatī.[46] The same Purāṇa familiarises us that amongst the worship of the five gods, the place of Gaṇapati was also well-established.[47] Traditionally, Gaṇapati is worshipped not only before the worship of other gods but also before the commencement of any activity in order to avert vighnas (the obstacles); and he is worshipped even by the great gods like Brahmā, etc.,

43. *Brahmāṇda Purāṇa*, Lalitopākhyāna, 27-104.

"Vitatāra Mahārājñi Priyamāṇa Gaṇesituḥ.
Sarvadaivata Pūjāyaḥ purvapūjyatvamuttamam".

44. *Gaṇeśa Purāṇa*, 1.45-10-11.

"Śaivaistvadīyairtha Vaiṣṇavaiśca Śāktaiśca Saurairatha Sarvakārye [Śubhāśubhe.
Laukika Vaidike ca tvamarcanīyaḥ prathaman prayatnāta".

45. cf. *Devī Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, 11-7-35.

46. cf. *Garuḍa Purāṇa*, 1-1-2.

47. *Ibid.*

"Dēvaṣṭakan ca sanpūjya kṛtvā cā āvāhanaghate.
Gaṇeśan ca Deneśan ca vanhi Nārāyaṇa Śivam.
Durgān pañco pacaraiśca sanpūjya Vratamarabhet".

and propitiated by other gods by tendering their devotional salutations to Gaṇeśa.[48] The *Brahmavaivartta Purāṇa* also speaks very high of Gaṇapati-worship when it attaches the primary importance to the worship of Gaṇapati and believes that Gaṇeśvara has always been worshipped even by the gods.[49] In the Smārtā procedure worship, which is prevalent in the Pañcādevopāsanā, Gaṇapati has been provided with an important position and he is also counted amongst the Ācaryas of the Bhakti Mārga (the path of devotion).[50] According to the system described in the *Padma Purāṇa*, Gaṇapati's place is next only to Sūrya. The text directs that after propitiating Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, Durgā, Rūdra and Viṣṇu, one should worship the domestic (family) Deity.[51] In the famous Tantric-text *Tantra-Sara* certain techniques of initiation (Dīksha-vidhiyān) like that of Pañcāyatanī–Dīkshā, are described in brief. The description of the Pañcāyatanī–Dīkshā found in the *Tantrasara* reminds us of the Pañcādevopāsanā system of the Smārtās. In the Pañcāyatanī–Dīkshā–system, the five Yantras (instruments) of the five Deities: Gaṇeśa, Śakti, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya are inscribed, and while propitiating these five Deities the 'Yantra' of the most favourite Deity is placed in the centre. While enjoining the Gāṇapatyas (the exclusive worshippers of Gaṇapati), the text says that when performing Pañcādevopāsanā, the Yantra of Gaṇeśa should be placed in the centre. When Gaṇapati is seated in the centre, Viṣṇu should be seated in the Tānakoṇa and Mahādeva on the Agnikoṇa, while on the Nairityakoṇa should be placed Sūrya (the Sun god) and the Vāyukoṇa should

48. "Let us mark the following important incantation :—
"Vāgīśadhyāḥ Sumana sarvārthānāmupakrame.
Yan natvā kṛtakṛtyāh syastan namāmi Gajānanam".

49. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, 1-14-33, 39.
"Gaṇeśvaran yo bhajate devan snātanam.
Sarvāgrapūjyan sarvaśan bhaktayā janmani janmani".

50. Note the following significant verse in this context.
"Śaivan ca vaiṣṇavan Śāktan sauran Vaināyakan tathā.
Skānda ca bhaktimārgasya darśanāni ṣadevahi".

51. Let us see the following verse from the *Padma Purāṇa*—
"Ādityan Gaṇanāthan ca Devi Rudran yathākram.
Nārāyaṇa Viśuddhākhyamante ca Kuladevatām".

be assigned to Pārvatī. The text also warns that if the places are exchanged or the seats are not properly provided to the gods, then the gods create fear, misery and sorrow.[52] The following Śloka (invocational incantation) is important enough to be marked in this context, which speaking of Pañcādevopāsanā indicates sufficiently towards the close association of Gaṇapati with the other four great gods with different representations.[53] While high-lighting the significance of Pañcādevopāsanā and indicating the importance of Gaṇeśopāsanā, the author of the *Ānanda-Rāmāyaṇa* says that the Gāṇapatyas (the worshippers of Gaṇapati); the Śaivas (the worshippers of Śiva); the Sauras (the worshippers of Sūrya); the Vaiṣṇavas (the worshippers of Viṣṇu) and the Śāktas (the worshippers of Śakti, Devi, Durgā) (meaning the Pañcādevopāsakās), achieve Brahman (the Ultimate-Reality) in the same way as the rainy-water merges in the great ocean. The author of the text, further speaks of the unity of the Divinity; He firmly believes that Brahman (the Absolute-Truth) is one and with the effect of the name and the action, the same Ultimate-Reality (Brahman) is manifested in the form of the five-forms of the gods (Pañcādevatās). Further illustrating the fact more lucidly, the text says that for instance, 'Devadatta' is the person who is the son of some one; the father of some one; and the uncle of some one; but originally (fundamentally) he is one and the same person.[54] This important idea of the *Ānanda-Rāmāyaṇa* has been corroborated by the Śrīmad Bhāgavata where the author talking of the unity

52. Let us mark the following verses from the *Tantra Sara* :—
"Gaṇanāthan yadāmadhe aiśānyān keśavan Yajet.
Āgnepyāmīśvaran caiva nairṛtyān tapanan tathā.
Vāyavyān Pārvatīn caiva pūjayenmoksha sādhinim.
Svasthāna varjitā devā dukhaḥ śoka bhaya pradāḥ".

53. Let us note the following devotional incantation :—
"Śivaḥ khamanilaś śaktisavirāgnirjalan hariḥ.
Maho-Gaṇeśaḥ Samproktaḥ Viśvameta dvayannumaḥ".

54. *Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa*, Vilāsakānda, 8-9-10.
"Śaivāḥ Saurāśca Gaṇeśa Vaiṣṇvāḥ Śaktipūjakāḥ.
Tameva Prāpnuvantiḥ varṣāpaḥ sāgaran yathā.
Aika sa pancadhā jātaḥ kriyayā nāmabhiḥ Kila.
Devadatto yathā Kaścitputrādyāhvāna nāmabhiḥ".

of the Divinity expresses the view that Brahman, 'the Ultimate Truth, is the Supreme source of the infinite incarnations, and He is the Immutable (the Immortal-one) seed of the entire creation; and it is He from whom the entire creation of the Gods, animals, birds and men, etc., takes place.[55] But we know that Gaṇapati, one of the great gods of the system of Pañcādevopāsanā, has been worshipped not only as Vighneśa but he has also been propitiated as "Paramabrahman", the Ultimate-Reality.[56] The following śloka of the *Gaṇeśa Purāṇa* signifies the importance of the Gaṇapati-worship where the prime-worship of Gaṇapati is established. The devotee says that Gaṇapati was known by the Vedas and was worshipped by the Munis (the spiritual-seekers) and the gods.[57] The *Logākshi Smṛti* opines that the different gods fulfill different desires and Gaṇapati is the bestower of all things, which adequately speaks of the significance of Gaṇapati in relation to Pañcādevopāsanā.[58] In relation to the Pañcādevopāsanā, the importance of Gaṇeśopāsanā is also hinted at by the *Brahma-vaivartta Purāṇa*, when Lord Śiva says that the worship of Gaṇapati eradicates obstructions, the worship of Sūrya destroys diseases and the worship of Viṣṇu bestows the internal and the

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55. *Śrīmadbhāgavata*, 1-3-5.
"Aitannānāvatāraṇā nidhānan bijamvyayam.
Yasyānśānśena sṛjyante devataryānarādayaḥ".

56. Vide, B. R. Sharma, Gaṇapati worshipped As Paramabrahman *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, M. S. University Baroda, Vol. XXXVI, No. 1, 1976, Baroda.

57. Let us read a very important verse from the *Gaṇeśa Purāṇa*:—
"Aumkārarūpi Bhagavān yas vidādau pratiṣṭhitaḥ.
Yan sadā munayan devāh smarantindrādayaohṛdi.
Aumkārarūpi Bhagavānuktastu Gaṇanāyakaḥ.
Yatha sarveṣu Kāryeṣu pūjyateasau Vināyakaḥ".

58. Let us mark the following verses from the *Logākshi Smṛti*:—
"Ārogyan Bhāskarādicchecchṛiyamicchedhdutāsanāt.
Iśvarājajñānamanvicchen mokshamicchejjanārdanāt.
Durgādibhistathā rakhān Bhairvādyaista durgamam·
Vidyāsāran sarasvatyā Lakshmya caiśvarya Vardhanam.
Pārvatyacaiva saubhāgyan śacyākalyāṇa sanvatatim.
Skandāt prajābhi vṛddhin ca sarvan caiva Gaṇādhipat.
Mūrtibhedā Maheśasya ta aite yanmayoditaḥ".

external purity.[59] The *Śabdakalapadruma* says that Gaṇapati, alongwith some other gods, has been worshipped before the commencement of any act.[60] Establishing his association with the Pañcādevatās, the *Gaṇapatyaṭharvaśirṣopaniṣad* identifies Gaṇapati with other gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rūdra, Sūrya, etc.[61] The *Gaṇeśa Gitā* also indicates towards the same fact when it says that Gaṇapati is not different from Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Sūrya.[62]

In the domain of Pañcādevopāsanā, Gaṇapati-vināyaka has been enjoying an extremely exalted position and the Śāstras direct the Pañcādevopāsakās (the worshippers of the five great sectarian gods) to attach primary importance to Gaṇapati and to propitiate him before the worship of any other god. According to the *Śiva Purāṇa* Gaṇapati should be worshipped even before the worship of the great gods like Brahmā, viṣṇu, śiva, etc., otherwise their worship would prove to be meaningless and at times harmful.[63] The *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* also corroborates this fact quite emphatically.[64]

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59. *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, Gaṇapati-khaṇda, 6-100.
"Gaṇeśa pūjana vighnan nirmūlan jagatān bhavet.
Nirvyādhiḥ Sūryapūjāyān suciḥ Śrīviṣṇupūjane".

60. Let us, observe an important verse from the *Śablakalpadruma*:—
"Ādityan Gaṇanāthan ca Devī Rudran ca Keśavam.
Pañcadaivamityuktan sarva karmasu Pūjayet".

61. *Gaṇapatyatharvaśirṣopaniṣad*, 6.
"Tvan Brahmā tvan Viṣṇustvan Rudratvanmindra
Svamagnistvan vāystvan Sūryastvan candrmāst van
Brahma Bhūbhurvaḥ svarom".

62. *Gaṇeśa Gitā*, 1-21.
"Śive Viṣṇau ca Śaktau ca Sūrye Mayi narādhip,
Yaabheda buddhiryogaḥ sa samyagyogomatomama".

63. *Śiva Purāṇa*, Rudra Saṁhitā, Kumārakhaṇda, 18-21, 23, 24.
"Trayo vayan suravarā yatha pūjyā jagattraye.
Tatthāyan Gaṇanāthaśca saklaih pratipūjyatām.
Aitatpūjān purā kṛtvā paścātpūjyāvyan naraiḥ.
Vayan ca pūjitāḥ sarvenāyan ca pūjitoyadā
Tadā tatphala hāniḥ syānnātra Kāryā Vicāraṇā".

64. *Brahmavaivarata Purāṇa*, 3-6-97-98.
"Pūjyaśca Sarvadevānāmasmakan Jagatān Vibhuḥ.
Sarvāgrapūjanam tasya bhavitā madvareṇa vai.
Pūjāsu sarvadevānāmagre sampūjyatan janaḥ".

From the above study we come to know that in India the synthetic and the liberal approach towards religion continued since very ancient periods of history. The Pañcādevopāsanā also speaks quite explicitly that despite many cults, various sects, and different religious systems, there was no sectarian narrowmindedness nor was there any sort of religious intolerance. It not only speaks of the close connection of Gaṇapati with Pañcopāsanā, but it also adequately hints at the very significant position occupied by Gaṇapati in the glorious domain of the Pañcādevopāsanā.

"KALABHRA INTERREGNUM"—A RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

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A Brief Outline

The attempts to resolve the Kaḷabhra problem during the past 50 years have become involved in a series of misconceptions, prejudices and narrow outlook. The conclusions reached therefrom appear premature, idiosyncratic and unsound. The differences of opinion expressed by authors have interpolated new factors of conflict and confusion into the problem. The artificial and arbitrary recognition of a 'Caṅkam age' lasting for the first three centuries of the Christian era and its presumed relation to the Kaḷabhras have further obscured the true underlying picture. Uncritical mixing up of epigraphic and literary sources in discussions is another detrimental factor in preventing the natural emergence of the factual state of affairs.

A re-interpretation of some of the words and phrases occurring in the Vēḷvikuḍi charter and a correct understanding of the sequence of events enumerated therein categorically proves that the invasion of the Pāṇḍya territory by the Kaḷabhras happened during the regnal years of the Pāṇḍya king, Rājasimha I, who in turn promptly drove the invader back into his territory. Therefore, the so-called '*Kaḷabhra interregnum*' was only of an extremely short duration lasting for a couple of years during the period of Rājasimha I (about the middle of the 8th century AD). The area of the terrain that was under the Kaḷabhra occupation constituted a relatively small part of the Pāṇḍya country,—between Karūr and Tiruchi in the north down to Chōḷavandan, Tirumaṅgalam and Madurai in the South.

The Kaḷabhras denote the Western Gaṅgas by virtue of their having had the elephant as their crest and symbol. Their coun-

try, Gaṅgavāḍi, bordered on the Pāṇḍya domain on the south and the Pallava territory on the east. The three dynasties were in constant military altercations with each other, particularly along the borders. The episode mentioned in the Pāṇḍyan charters refers to one of such struggles. Similar encounters were of more frequent occurrence between the Gaṅgas and Pallavas from the time of Simhaviṣṇu through Nandivarman II Pallavamalla. Epigraphic records of the concerned dynasties bear ample testimony to these battles. The subjugation of the Gaṅgas spoken of in the Chālukyan epigraphs, however, is to be considered as mere embellishments until new evidence to the contrary is discovered.

The "*Kaḷabhra interregnum*" has been given an unwarrantedly exaggerated status and significance in the history of the Tamiḻ country. An impartial evaluation of data clearly indicates that the Gaṅgas never had a permanent hold over the Pāṇḍya or Pallava territories to leave their impact. The only contribution of their having stepped into the Pāṇḍya country has been their leaving behind the descendants known by the name Kaḷappāḷars, who soon became completely absorbed into Tamiḻ land and its culture. The Kaḷabhras had nothing to do with the destruction of the Tamiḻ 'Caṅkam' or of setting up a new order of things, political, literary or cultural.

Retrospect

The discovery of the Vēḷvikuḍi copper plate inscription in 1908 (Veṅkayya, *Ann. Rep. Epigr.*, 1908) marks an important event in having opened a new phase in the history of Tamiḻ Nāḍu. Apart from giving an account of the genealogy of the Pāṇḍyas from the time of Kaḍunkōn to that of Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan, the charter speaks of an invasion of the Pāṇḍya country by an outside party called Kaḷabhras. Venkayya surmised that the Pāṇḍya dynasty spoken of in this record was a new one, coming into existence long after an earlier line of kings (who lived during what has been traditionally known as the Tamiḻ Caṅkam) was terminated. Implying that the Kaḷabhras could have been responsible for the extinction of the earlier house of

the Pāṇḍyas, Veṅkayya introduced the term "*Kaḷabhra interregnum*" to designate the interval of time between the end of the earlier dynasty and the commencement of the new dynasty headed by Kaḍuṅkōn.

From then on, the epithet "*Kaḷabhra interregnum*" has become an abracadabra to explain away the so-called 'dark' period in the political, cultural and literary histories of Tamiḻ Nāḍu and also to formulate new concepts. It has also played a significant role in perpetuating the fanciful theory that the opening three centuries of the Christian era represent the "Caṅkam" age (Saṅkara, 1922; Nīlakanta Sastri, 1929, and others).

The period of the Kaḷabhra occupation is said to have extended for nearly 300 years and to have involved the entire terrain ruled by the Cēras, Cōḻas and Pāṇḍyas; it is said that some of these dynasties 'disappeared' following the Kaḷabhra incursion. It is also believed that Buddhism and Jainism received tremendous patronage during this period in the then Tamiḻagam and that the indigenous culture suffered total destruction. If there can be any truth in these statements, should we not expect to find some relics of the impact left by the Kaḷabhras during later periods? It is a pity that historians are silent on this point.

The most significant lacuna in the Kaḷabhra problem concerns their identity. Although several attempts have been made off and on to ascertain who they were, none of the propositions put forward are acceptable for one reason or the other.

The object of this study is to critically analyse and evaluate the source materials, to assess the opinions already expressed by scholars, to reject such of the views that are not in keeping with facts, and to provide a new angle for future research.

An analysis of the data in the Vēḷvikuḍi grant of Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan

(1) *On the duration of enjoyment of the brahmadēya gift.*

A village named Vēḷvikuḍi was given to one Naṟkoṟṟan (line 31) — also called Kāmākkāni Naṟachiṅgan (line 17) and

Kāmmakkaṇi Śuvarnaṇ Siṅgaṇ (line 134)—the headman of Koṟkai, by a Pāṇḍyan *ādhirāja* by name Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḷudi so as to enable Naṟkoṟṟan to complete a Vēdic sacrifice (lines 31-38) that had been commenced earlier.

"Then a Kali king Kaḷabhran took possession of the extensive earth driving away numberless great kings and resumed (village mentioned) above" (line 39).

"After that, the Pāṇḍyādhirāja named Kaḍuṅkōn............ occupied (the throne),...............destroyed the kings of the extensive earth" and established her (the earth) "in his own possession in the approved manner and destroyed the shining cities of kings who would not submit to him."

This is the gist and sequence of events as narrated in the charter.

An estimate of the duration of enjoyment of the gift by Naṟkoṟṟan becomes necessary in order to assess the interval of time and that elapsed between the bestowal of the gift and its usurpation by the Kaḷabhras. Saṅkara (1919/20) was aware of the fact that the inscription does not state "whether the donee himself or his successors also enjoyed the property. But *nīḍu*, i. e., 'long' suggests that the latter alternative is more probable of the two". Nilakanta Sastri (1929) also contended that the interval must be a fairly long one since Naṟkoṟṟan complained to Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan after several centuries involving seven generations of rulers had elapsed. In justification of his stand he stated that the "gift was enjoyed by the donee and his descendents for long before the Kaḷabhra interregnum." Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935) also expressed the same opinion. "The *bhukti* or the gift of the village continued for a very long time means not within the life-time of Naṟkoṟṟan but through generations."

The inscriptional phrase, "vēndaṇ = appoḷudēy = nīrōḍ = aṭṭi = kkoḍuttamaiyā = nīḍu-bhukti tutta (tuytta) ...." has been rendered by Krishna Sastri (1923/4) as "The king at once gave it with libations of water and it was since long (so) enjo-

yed." The authors mentioned above do not appear to be satisfied with the emphasis given to the word *niḍu* in Krishna Sastri's rendering. Apart from drawing attention to the parallelism in the names of kings in the Vēḷvikuḍi charter and in the so-called 'Caṅkam' literature, Krishna Sastri did not visualize genealogical relationships between them. Nilakaṇta Sastri and Krishnaswami Aiyangar, however, discovered much deeper significance in the parallelism and endeavoured to place Mudukuḍumi in direct line of the Pāṇḍya genealogy as one of its early ancestors. Therefore, they were obliged to stretch the interval of time between Mudukuḍumi and Kaḍunkōn in order to bridge up the 'Caṅkam' age (the first three centuries of the Christian era during which Mudukuḍumi is presumed to have lived) and Kaḍuṅkōn, whose date is deemed to lie in the borderline of the sixth and seventh centuries.

The inscriptional phrase cited above lends itself to an alternative rendering thus: "The king at once gave it (with libations of water) as a gift meant to be enjoyed for long". This meaning conveys the correct spirit with which the grant was made, implying, in other words, that it was to last as permanently as the sun and moon, a prevailing epigraphic idiom of medieval South India. Therefore there is no warrant to interpret the word *niḍu* out of this context.

(2) *Identity of Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḷudi*

All efforts that have been made to identify Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi have been strongly 'Caṅkam'-centered and 'Caṅkam'-biassed. The contemporary understanding of 'the 'Caṅkam age' itself is an end product of a series of dogmatic assertions and the fixation of this age as confined to the first three centuries of the Christian era, is most arbitrary and artificial. Even so, the scholars who attempted to reconstruct the genealogies of the presumed kings of the 'Caṅkam age' could not accommodate Mudukuḍumi. Kanakasabhai (1904) left him out of the Pāṇḍya genealogy. Sivaraja Pillai (1912) raised serious doubts whether any Pāṇḍyan king could be credited with the performance of Vēdic sacrifices at that early period as the 'Caṅkam age', as "conditions of that period do not seem to favour any such reli-

gious activity." He therefore considered such of those bits of 'Cañkam' poetry that attributes the performances of Vēdic rituals as being interpolations of a later date. However, he was at the same time inclined to identify Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi with one Veḷḷiambalattu-tuñjiya Peruvaḷudi whose where abouts are still much more uncertain. Sadasiva Pandarattār (1969), who discussed the supposed Pāṇḍyan rulers of the 'Cañkam' period has chosen to completely omit the name of this king. Nilakanṭa Sastri (1932) also excluded this ruler from his reconstructed genealogy of the historical Pāṇḍyas and in a more recent publication (1965) cautiously refers to him as being a "more life-like figure than Neḍiyon", thereby implying that the historicity of both these rulers is questionable, varying only in degree.

It is to be regretted that the king Tēr-māran of the Vēḷvikuḍi plates has been consistently taken to mean "Māran of the horse chariot". A careful reading of the text indicates that the composer has employed the word *tēr* in a double meaning, one probably in the sense of chariot as above, and the other as meaning 'learned' or 'discriminating', in view of the qualities that are attributed to him besides those of his prowess: "performing on earth countless (gifts of) *gōsahasra*, *hiraṇyagarbha* and *tulābhāra*, relieved of the distress of (the Brāhmaṇas) who studies the Vēdas." It is to be remembered that the ceremonies mentioned possess Vēdic sanction and that Tēr Māran was also a patron of Brahmaṇas who performed Vēdic sacrifices. Is it not likely that Palyāgamudukuḍumi Peruvaḷudi was a fitting epithet to the learned (*tēr*) Māran, who in turn has been identified as Rājasimha I?

Thus it becomes evident that Rājasimha I made the original gift of Vēḷvikuḍi to Naṛkoṟṟan and this king's son Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan re-granted the same gift to the same donee.

It is pertinent to recall *Puṟanāṉūṟu* 15 in this connection. The epithet 'Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḷudi' is used here as referring to the personal name of the king. This poem mentions some of his deeds: driving the elephants to the battle fields of the enemy and his partiality towards Vēdic sacrifices.

These are shared both by Palyāgasalai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḷudi and Tēr Māran thereby supporting the identification proposed here. Whether this and other poems of *Puṟanāṉūṟu* that contain references to Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi alone are to be considered as later interpolations as opined by Sivaraja Pillai or whether the whole or at least a major part of the poems collected together in *Puṟanāṉūṟu* were composed during or after the eighth/ninth centuries AD is another question.

(3) *A comment on the ādhirājas*

"aḷavariya ādhirājarai akala nīkki..........." (line 39) has been rendered as "........... driving away numberless great kings" by Krishna Sastri (1923/4). Even before the publication of the full text of the inscription by this author, the scope of the word *aḷavariya* had given rise to some differences of opinion. Sankara's (1920/1) rendering of the concerned phrase reads: "countless Pāṇḍyas through their last representative." Subramaniam (1921/2) promptly pointed out the unacceptability of this rendering and stated that *aḷavariya ādhirājarai* therefore means merely 'countless Pāṇḍyas'". Nilakanta Sastri (1929) clearly stated that *aḷavariya* is to be taken as a natural exaggeration. Even accepting this suggestion and allowing margin, the phrase *aḷavariya ādhirājarai* taken as a whole necessarily implies a number more than one. It may be at least two as Sankara (1920/1) interprets or at best a small number that could be counted on fingers. Yet the question remains open whether the terrain occupied by the Kalabhras was being ruled by more than one great king, *ādhirāja*, belonging to the same dynasty at one and the same time. If the term *ādhirāja* is taken in a non-technical sense as referring to endemic chieftains (and not in the sense of strictly crowned kings), it appears possible that different parts of the Pāṇḍya domain were in charge of a few subordinate members of the dynasty, who have been spoken of as *ādhirājas* by way of giving them an exalted status.

(4) *Were the Kaḷabhras 'brave' or 'wicked'?*

The word *kali* used in connection with the Kaḷabhra king who took possession of the Vēḷvikuḍi terrain has been taken to refer to a dynasty called *Kalikula* (Krishna Sastri, 1923/4). Hultzsch (EI

XVIII p. 260) interpreted the term as indicating the people of the kali-age (see also Arokiaswami, 1956). Nilakanta Sastri observed in 1929 and that nothing is known of such a dynasty yet." This statement stands as well today.

Srinivasa Aiyangar (1929) translated *kali* as 'cruel'. Several other writers also understand the word in this sense. For example, Sathianathaiyer (1954) calls the Kaḷabhras "terrible and ruthless", thereby extending the import of wickedness.

Neither of the above translations appear to be relevant in the context. The word *kali* is best taken to mean 'strong', 'powerful', etc., and the import of the phrase "kaḷabhran=ennum=kali=araiśan" as "a valorous king of the Kaḷabhra (clan)". That this should be the correct sense is further confirmed by the use of another adjective *tuḷakkamillā* (line 111) in reference to the same Kaḷabhras. This word, again, has been translated as 'ignoble' by Krishna Sastri (1923/4). Some of the later authors have accepted this rendering and freely attributed all the maximum sinning qualities to the intruders. Nilakanṭa Sastri (1929) pointed out the misunderstood context in which the word *tuḷakkamillā* was rendered and suggested that is should be taken to mean 'brave'. Thus both '*kali*' and '*tuḷakkamillā*' refer only to the sanguine prowess of the Kaḷabhras.

The single instance of their having occupied Vēḷvikuḍi, a *bramhadēya* land, has been taken to summarily condemn the Kaḷabhras. It should be noted that in military encounters no one expects either party to know beforehand the *bramhadēya* enclosures located in their advancing directions. The occupation of Vēḷvikuḍi by the Kaḷabhras should be taken merely as an unintentional routine during battles and nothing more. As Raghava Aiyangar (1930 b) observes, "it could not be the deliberate act on the part of the sovereign nor could it be due to any spite against any particular individual."

(5) Temporal factors in the sequence of events

The subject matter of the Tamiḻ part of the charter is handled in the following sequence by the composer of the inscription:

(a) The grant of the village Vēḷvikuḍi (for the first time) to, Narkoṟṟan by Mudukuḍumi.

(b) The occupation of Vēḷvikuḍi terrain by the Kaḷabhra.

(c) The ancestors (six generations) of Neḍuñjaḍaiyan, the donor of the grant.

(d) The re-grant of Vēḷvikuḍi to Naṟkoṟṟan by Neḍuñjaḍaiyan.

Superficially, the sequence of events appears rather curious and intriguing. A deceptive impression is gained as if the Kaḷabhras were in occupation of Vēḷvikuḍi (step—b) all through the six or seven generation of kings (step—c) prior to the re-grant of the village (step—d). Nilakanṭa Sastri (1929) observes: " It is strange that this man (Naṟkoṟṟan) should have waited for seven generations after the Pāṇḍyan restoration to reclaim the grant......". It is stranger still that Naṟkoṟṟan should have lived through all these generations from Mudukuḍumi to Neḍuñjaḍaiyan to demand the return of his property! And, the strangest of all is the fact that this anomaly has been passively accepted by scholars.

The deception in this case is an artificially induced one, resulting from certain *a priori* assumptions *viz.*: that Muḍukuḍumi, the first donor of Vēḷvikuḍi, was a king of the 'Cankam' age having ruled sometime before the third century A.D.; and that Kaḍuṅkōn, whose date has been fixed around 600 A.D., was the king who fought against the Kaḷabhras and won back the lost Pāṇḍyan territory. These assumptions necessitated a bridging of the gap between the fourth and seventh centuries in order to force a seeming continuity in the Pāṇḍyan genealogy from the 'Caṅkam' age to the 'post-Caṅkam' age. It is towards this effort that unwarranted emphasis has been laid on the word *niḍu* and the overall time factor from Mudukuḍumi to Kaḍuṅkōn has been unduly stretched. Wherever it was advantageous, the word *pin* has been taken to convey a long stretch of time. For example, it has been argued that the grant received by the donee was in enjoyment of not only Naṟkoṟṟan but also of his descendants (Nilakanta Sastri, 1929 Krishnaswami Aiyangar, 1935; Anon, 1967).

The import of certain words or phrases employed in the passages often deviate in the degree of emphasis from modern usage and as such, one is obliged to make necessary allowances in order to appreciate the nuances and the underlying purpose of the language. The point that concerns us now is the usage of the adverb *piṉ* occurring at the end after stating an event. In modern parlance it denotes a time sequence—"after this or that is over" and under such contexts, the next event narrated naturally acquires the prefix '*then*'. In addition to this import in narrative method, there is yet another sense conveyed. Here again it is a temporal implication but in another context—a context in spoken idiom and style—denoting a provisional pause,—"let this lie aside for the time being", implying that the broken end of thought or event would be continued later on.

The term *piṉ* used at the end of events in lines 39 and 40 respectively referring to the gift of Vēḷvikuḍi by Mudukuḍumi (item—*a*) and to the Kaḷabhra incursion (item—*d*)—are to be taken in the sense that "let these events be set aside for the time being until they will be taken up again later when occasion arises", and *not* as indicating long interval of time between the events. After informing that the *bramhadēya* gift, Vēḷvikuḍi, was occupied by the Kaḷabhras, the composer, in his individualistic narrative style, introduces us to Neḍuñjaḍaiyan who belonged to the ancestry as outlined in item *c* and who re-granted the village to Naṛkoṟṟan (item—*d*). When it is thus realised that the item *d* is related directly to the item *b* both in time and space, it is clear that the item *c* is a parenthesis, and therefore, the chronological succession of events is indicated in the order *a*, *b* and *d*. Item *c* therefore is nothing more than a sub-story introduced into the main stream of narration. The latter may be paraphrased as follows: Naṛkoṟṟan received Vēḷvikuḍi from Mudukuḍumi (Rājasimha I); it was abrogated by the Kaḷabhras; Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan returned it to the donee.

Thus all these events happened within the life-time of Naṛkoṟṟan, who was a contemporary of two successive kings—the original donor and the second donor. At no stage in the entire

gamut of events is there any provision to stretch the intervals of time beyond the life-span of Naṟkoṟṟan, who must have lived the same number of years as any other average human individual.

(6) *A gloss on Kaḍuṅkōn*

Almost all writers on Kaḷabhras and on the Vēḷvikuḍi charter have uniformly taken for granted that Kaḍuṅkōn, the Pāṇḍya ruler, drove away the Kaḷabhra intruders. The literary jargon adopted by the composer to introduce this person is quite dramatic and draws everyone's attention to this king as the cynosure of the dynasty. The rather superlative epithets that are used to describe his acts of valour are even more dramatic and create a sense of awe. He is said to have "destroyed the kings of the extensive earth surrounded by the sea.........". If this is interpreted literally, it means that he conquered at least the entire peninsular India!

In spite of the flowery language and exaggerated adjectives employed to describe his prowess, there is no reference any where in the inscription to presume that he reconquered the territory which had been occupied by the Kaḷabhras. Yet the notion that Kaḍuṅkōn retrieved the country from the Kaḷabhras has become deeply rooted in the minds of historians and has formed the foundations for erecting speculative superstructures. As explained earlier, in spite of the adumbrative sheen given to Kaḍuṅkōn, his place in the epigraph is only that of the initiator of a dynasty of rulers; he has nothing to do with the Kaḷabhras or with the actual events contained in the charter. The lone voice raised by Subramaniam (1921/2) conveying this mood soon became lost in the aggressive din of opposition.

Assessment I

The earliest reference to the Kaḷabhras is found in the Vēḷvikuḍi charter of the Pāṇḍya king Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan. Here they are spoken of as having occupied a terrain in which a village, Vēḷvikuḍi, was situated. This village had been gifted to one Naṟkoṟṟan by a king named Mudukuḍumi, an ancestor of Neḍuñjaḍaiyan. The donee appealed to Neḍuñjaḍaiyan that the

property which he was enjoying had been usurped by the Kaḷabhras and that it may be returned to him. Neḍuñjaḍaiyan re-granted Vēḷvikuḍi to the same donee.

In order to obtain a true import of the Kaḷabhra theme in the inscription, it is necessary to apply alternative meanings to some of the textual words and idioms. Then it logically follows: (i) that the original donor of Vēḷvikuḍi village was Tēr Māran (Rājasimha I) who possessed the epithet, Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḷudi in recognition of his having been the patron of those who performed Vēdic sacrifices; (ii) that when Naṟkoṟṟan, the donee, was enjoying the gift, the valourous Kaḷabhras over-ran a part of the terrain which included the gift-village; (iii) that in the meantime Rājasimha lost no time in driving out the enemy-occupants [and possibly died in the encounter;] (iv) that Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan, his son, succeeded him. When the latter ascended the throne, Naṟkoṟṟan appealed to him for the re-grant of the village, and the king in turn complied. Thus the entire Kaḷabhra episode was over within the life-time of the donee who was a contemporary of two successive rulers.

The Kaḷabhras have been invariably referred to as a satanic clan and this has led to unwarranted animus. They have been pointedly accused of a total lack of sentiment because of their having occupied a *bramhadēya* land. The adjectives used in the inscription for the Kaḷabhras nearly mean fearless or brave in the martial context. The occupation of Vēḷvikuḍi by them should be taken merely as an unintentional routine during wars and nothing more.

The duration of the Kaḷabhra rule

(a) On the concept of the 'Caṅkam age'

All authors without exception place the 'Kaḷabhra interregnum' as immediately following the so-called 'Caṅkam age'. In order to fully appreciate the Kaḷabhra problem it is necessary to critically examine the basis underlying the concept of the 'Caṅkam age'.

At a time when old Tamiḻ anthological literature was being resurrected from manuscripts and printed editions issued in the last quarter of the 19th and the early part of the 20th centuries, such literature was collectively called the 'Çaṅkam works'. By tradition, 'Çaṅkam works' were until then strictly limited to the 18 major and 18 minor anthologies. The publication of old non-anthological literature—*S'ilappadikāram*, *Tolkāppiyam*, *Maṇimēkalai*, etc.,—coincided with the same period, and these works also were pushed into the 'Çaṅkam' fold.

It was soon realized that there was a wealth of source materials in these works of literature which would enlighten the social and cultural trends of the remote past. Caldwell's ideas on the 'Dravidian' and his opinions on the antiquity of the Tamiḻ language—that it was a language which had developed without being contaminated or influenced by any external influences, set the stage for further rigidification of thought. The commentator of Iṛaiyaṉār's *Akapporuḷ* had already created a story glorifying the ancient character of Tamiḻ literature. According to this author, this language was being patronised by kings over thousands of years through three successive literary Academies or 'Çaṅkam'. It is believed that the literature produced during the last 'Çaṅkam' has come down to us.

The names of kings and chieftains that figure in the 'Çaṅkam' literature were given historicity, often confusing epithets with personal names and their genealogies reconstructed under Çēra, Çoḻa and Pāṇḍya dynasties. In this endeavour (i) stray references to Roman people occurring in some of the 'Çaṅkam' works; (ii) the identification of certain place names mentioned by the Greek geographers of the early centuries of the Christian era with towns or ports of South India; (iii) the discovery of Roman coins of roughly the same centuries in the same terrain; (iv) the mention of some articles of trade and commerce in the 'Çaṅkam' works and in the account of the Greek geographers; and (v) the presumed synchronism of the regnal period of one Śēran Senguṭṭuvan of *S'ilappadikāram* with a Gajabāhu of the Ceylon chronicle, *Mahāvamśa*, were brought forward, by curious logic, as

proofs for placing the 'Caṅkam' works (along with *Śilappadikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai*) in the early period of the Christian era, at any rate not later than the third century A.D. As a consequence, it became imperative to accommodate all the kings and chieftains mentioned in the 'Caṅkam' literature strictly within this time span.

The contemporary concept of the 'Caṅkam age' is thus the cumulative outcome of a series of superimposed *a priori* assumptions and repetitive assertions. The concept has been so well pamphleteered over the past five decades that any effort towards free thinking is promptly curbed. Even historians, who are expected to be guided by objectivity, have uncritically succumbed to accept the popular notions as proven facts.

(*b*) *Commencement of the Kaḷabhra rule*

When the Vēḷvikuḍi charter came to light in 1908, Veṅkayya, its first commentator, cautiously avoided pronouncements on the relationship of the 'Caṅkam age' to the contents of the grant. In reference to the tidal wave or deluge referred to in the inscription, he drew attention to parallel incidents from Tamiḻ literature (*Maduraikkāñji, Puṛanāṉūṟu, Madura Stalapurāṇam, Tiruvilaiyāḍal purāṇam,* the commentary on Iṛaiyanār's *Akapporuḷ*); he also stated that "It is interesting to note that the name Kaduṅkon mentioned as that of the last Pāṇḍya king of the first Academy (Caṅkam) occurs in our inscription as the designation of the first of the Pāṇḍya kings subsequent to the Kaḷabhra interregnum." With reference to the Kaḷabhra his words are: "In all probability, some successor of Mudukuḍumi was driven out of the Pāṇḍya kingdom by a Kaḷabhra king." Sankara (1920/1; 1922) expressed a similar opinion. Nilakanṭa Sastri's ideas have kept on changing during the course of years: in 1929 he thougt that the Kaḷabhra occupation must have commenced "long after Mudukuḍumi"; in 1955 he was more specific that their incursion followed the 'Caṅkam age', about 300 A.D.; in 1963 he placed the close of the Caṅkam age in the fifth century A.D., and the Kaḷabhra incursion therefore should have taken place subsequently. Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935) argued that the

interregnum should have commenced at the beginning of the fourth century. Rajamanikkam (1944) thought that the third Caṅkam mentioned in the commentary of Iṛaiyanār's *Akapporuḷ* came to an end in the late third century and Kaḷabhra incursion followed immediately.

Thus there appear to be two schcols of thought, one fixing the commencement of the Kaḷabhra inroad in reference to the end of Mudukuḍumi's rule and the other in reference to the close of the third 'Caṅkam' as the starting point. Venkataraman (1956/7), on grounds, independent of these presumed that the Kaḷabhras must have marched into the Tamiḻ country in the fifth century A.D.

(*c*) *Duration of the Kaḷabhra rule*

There is a much greater degree of diversity of opinion in regard to the period of occupation of the Pāṇḍya country by the Kaḷabhras. Veṅkayya (1908) and Krishna Sastri (1923/4) had no opinion to offer in this regard. The former author clearly admitted that "no information is forth-coming" which would help to ascertain the duration the Kaḷabhra rule over the Tamiḻ country. Sankara (1922) thought that the Kaḷabhras were prominent during c. 600 A.D. to c. 750 A.D. Nilakanṭa Sastri (1955) presumed that the interregnum lasted between 300 and 600 A.D. According to Sadasiva Paṇdarattar (1969) and Arokiaswami (1956) the period lasted between the third to the sixth and fourth to the sixth centuries respectively. In 1963, Nilakanṭa Sastri changed his earlier opinion and said that it is a matter which "cannot be determined." Subramanian (1966) assumed the period to coincide with "a century or two before Simhaviṣṇu." Rajamanikkam (1944) placed the period of the interregnum between 250 and 375 A.D., and Venkataraman (1956/7) in the fifth and sixth centuries. Srinivasa Aiyargar (1929) proposed the shortest duration of one hundred years between 450 and 550 A.D.

According to Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935), the date of restoration of Vēḷvikuḍi could not have been far removed from A.D. 769/70, which is the date ascribed to Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan.

If this was a part of the campaign in driving away the Kaḷabhras from the occupied territory, then the donor of the grant gets the credit and not Kaḍuṅgōn; thus the Kaḷabhras' decline should have commenced in the eighth century. Veṅkayya (1908) had also expressed a similar view.

(*d*) *Termination of the Kaḷabhra rule*

As early as 1929, Nilakanṭa Sastri stated that the Kaḷabhras were driven out of the occupied territory by Kaḍuṅkōn in about 600 A.D. He has maintained this opinion all through his subsequent writings, although, as already observed, his ideas in regard to the period of commencement and duration of the Kaḷabhra occupation have been modified. Many authors from 1950 onwards hold the same opinion in regard to the end of the Kaḷabhra rule and also that this was brought about by Kaḍuṅkōn (Sathianathaier, 1954; Venkataraman, 1956/7; Mahalingam, 1969, *et al*). Rajamanikkam (1944) and Sathianāthaier (1954), after taking into consideration the part played by the Pallavas and Chalukyas also in vanquishing the Kaḷabhras, extend the period of Kaḷabhra occupation into the eighth century.

Assessment II

The widely held concept of the 'Caṅkam age' and the assumption that it lasted for nearly three centuries frōm the commencement of the Christian era are based either on extremely flimsy foundation or on a series of *a priori* assertions and re-iteration. Instead of re-examining foundations of the concept, it is unfortunate that superstructures of plausible stability have been constructed. The presumed termination of the 'Caṅkam age' by the end of the third century A.D. has created an artificial void during the next 300 years in the literary and cultural history of the Tamiḻ country until the commencement of the Pallava rule in the seventh century A.D. "Kaḷabhra interregnum" has been conveniently used as a plug to fill the gap between the third and the seventh centuries A.D. in an effort to provide a verisimilitude of historical and chronological continuity.

This situation necessarily raises some questions of consequential nature apart from the problem of the identity of the Kaḷabhras: if they had been in possession of a terrain—an extensive terrain involving the Pāṇḍya, Cōḷa and Cēra kingdoms as claimed by many authors—for 200—300 years, how is it that there has not been a shred of evidence of the impact that the Kaḷabhras should have left on the Tamiḻ land and its people? Were they really in occupation of such a vast area over that long period? Of course, questions such as these have not been posed openly.

The vast difference of opinion in regard to the commencement of the Kaḷabhra occupation is because of the unfounded recognition of the 'Caṅkam age' in the early centuries of the Christian era with diffuse upper limit. The variations of opinion in reference to the upper limit of the interregnum, on the other hand, is related to the criterion chosen to determine the dynasty that vanquished the enemies.

The extent of the Kaḷabhra occupation

When Veṅkayya announced the discovery of the Vēḷvikuḍi copper plates, he noted in passing "the Kaḷabhra occupation of the Pāṇḍya country." This remark has no more significance than a casual one as the author himself was fully aware of the extremely limited nature of data at his disposal. Sankara (1919/20) also appears to imply that the Kaḷabhra occupation affected the Pāṇḍyas, as a result of which "they were dispossessed of the kingdom." While commenting on the opinion expressed by this author, Subramaniam (1921/22) interjected: "......the Kaḷabhra occupation of Madura......", thereby specifying a locality in the area occupied by the intruders. After a comprehensive reading of the inscription, Krishna Sastri (1923/4) suggested with a greater degree of confidence that the Kaḷabhras "brought under subjugation the whole Pāṇḍya country including, of course, the village Vēḷvikuḍi."

According to Krishnaswami Aiyangar, the terrain occupied by the Kaḷabhras covered from south of Kāñchi to north of Kāvēri (1935). Krishna Rao thought that it was Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam that became involved (1936). Neither of these authors substantiated

their opinions with reasons; their conclusions are based largely upon the Kaḷabhra-Simhaviṣṇu relationships. Sathianāthaiyer (1954) implied that a part of the Pallava country also had been occupied by these intruders.

The remaining authors fall into two groups. According to one of these, the area abrogated by the Kaḷabhras was relatively small, confined to Madurai and its environs or to the Pāṇḍya country as a whole (Srinivasa Aiyangar, 1929; Krishnaswami Aiyangar, 1935; Mahalingam, 1969). The second group of authors envisage a far greater area. Although Nilakaṇṭa Sastri expressed himself in favour of the first school in his earlier writing (1929), he himself endeavoured to create the second school later. According to this view, the intruders occupied the "whole country" (Tamiḻ land) and "overthrew all the established dynasties of Southern India......" (Nilakaṇṭa Sastri, 1955, 1963). Venkataraman (1956/7), Arokiaswami (1956), and Sadasiva Pandarattar (1969) tacitly agree with Nilakaṇṭa Sastri's revised opinion. Krishnan (1970) contends that it is not the "traditional Çēra, Çōḷa and Pāṇḍya" kingdoms that were occupied but the Pallava Çōḷa and Pāṇḍya territories.

This difference of opinion has arisen as a result of the degree of emphasis that has been laid on two adjectives, *aḷavariya ādhirājarai* and *akal-iḍattai,* occuring in the inscription. According to the first school the scope involved in the phrases is restricted and according to the second, extended. The controversy in reference to the first phrase has already been referred to earlier. Nilakaṇṭa Sastri (1929) did not agree with the interpretation either of Sankara (1920/1) or of Subramaniam (1921/2), which was restricted in scope, and therefore suggested that "it seems simpler to make it (the phrase) refer to other rulers besides the Pāṇḍyas and understand the phrase *aḷavariya* as containing a rather natural exaggeration of the number of dynasties displaced."

Nilakaṇṭa Sastri's wavering attitude in implying that the Kaḷabhras over-ran the Pāṇḍya country in one breath and that the *ādhirājas* who were subjugated by the same Kaḷabhras belonged to rulers besides the Pāṇḍyas in another breath and yet at the same time contending that *aḷavariya* is an exaggeration is evidenced

in the inscription itself. Such hyperbolic epithets have been used for Kaḍuṅkōn ("Destroyed the kings of the extensive earth"), and Śaḍaiyan ("removed the word 'common property' with reference to the country bordering on the roaring sea"). In the same way, just as the Kaḷabhras are said to have occupied "*akal-idattai*", some of the Pāṇḍya kings figuring in the same inscription are also qualified by phrases conveying similar import.

In spite of such bloated praises encountered throughout the inscription either in reference to the Pāṇḍya kings or to the Kaḷabhras, the charter contains some data of value to obtain a rough idea of the terrain that was under the Kaḷabhra occupation.

There is no direct proof in the charter to presume that the donor of the grant was ruling from Kūḍal. However, there is an implied suggestion to that effect in the bio-data given for his father Rājasimha I. It is said that this king "renewed the palaces and high ramparts" at Kūḍal, Vañji and Kōḷi. These places obviously should have suffered destruction due to some military encounters and therefore necessitated renewal. Of these, Vañji and Kōḷi have been respectively identified as Karūr and Woṛaiyur, both of which are located almost on the bank of the Kāvēri. Kūḍal, which is taken to be Madurai, lies farther south, some 70 miles (112 Kms) as the bird flies. Rājasimha and his son Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan could have ruled from any one of these localitie as all of them had now been made safe to themselves and, resistent to the enemies. In any case, it looks as if these places had been rendered secure after they were reconquered by Rājasimha I from the hands of the intruders.

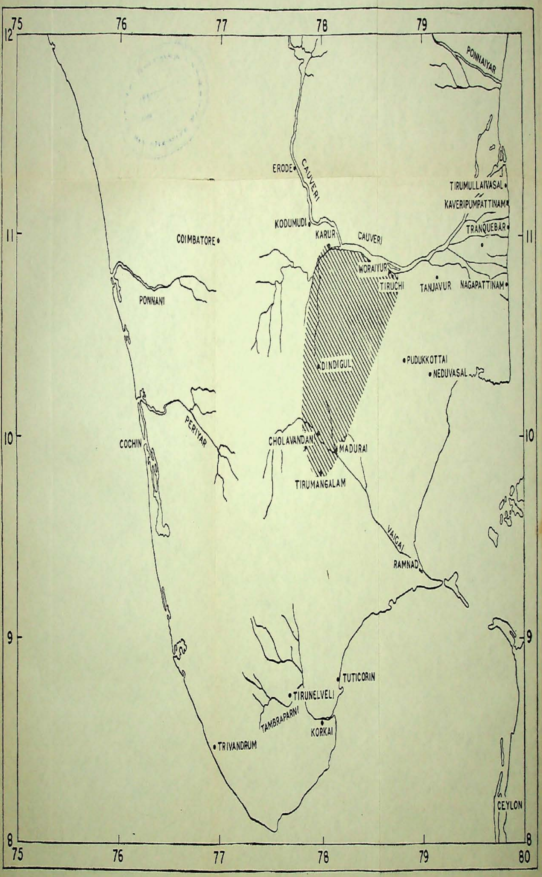
It is during this period, when Neḍuñjaḍaiyan was staying at Madurai, that Naṛkoṟṟan come over to this place all the way from Koṛkai (near the mouth of the Tamraparṇi river)—which was under his headship—to lodge his petition. The village Vēḷvikuḍi was situated in Pāganūr-Kūṟṟam which has been taken to be "identical with the division of that name in which the village Soḷavandān near Madurai was located" (Krishna Sastri, 1923/4), and as we have seen, this was also a terrain overrun by the Kaḷabhras.

Just as Korkai had a headman, other strategical towns in the Pāṇḍya territory, such as Karūr, Woṛaiyur, etc., must have been under the control of chiefs who were closely related to the ruling Pāṇḍya kings by blood. Because they represented the Pāṇḍya royalty holding charge of fortified centres, they might have been enjoying a status similar to the rulers themselves in some specified measure. In all probability it is such subordinate chiefs that are designated as *ādhirājas* in the charter. The number of those that succumbed to the Kaḷabhras, as can be judged from the data available in the charter itself, cannot be more than three of four. It is also clear that their loci of concentration was the southern bank of Kāvēri, extending farther south down to Madurai.

This data also circumscribes *akal-iḍam* (expanse) that was over-run by the Kaḷabhras. The northern boundary was the Kāvēri itself between Karūr and Woṛaiyūr; the southern limit lay along the line joining Soḻavandān and Madurai through Tirumaṅgalam; and the eastern border included a part of the Pudukōṭṭai region (Map 1). Politically, the northern border was constantly exposed to the incursions by the Pallavas or their allies; the north-west and western areas (Koṅgu) was under the control of the Western Gaṅgas, who either on their own or on behalf of the Western Chāḷukyas, were a perpetual source of trouble to the neighbouring dynasties. Rājasimha's subjugation of Maḷa-Koṅgam, march to Pāṇḍikkoḍumuḍi and, establishment of relationships with the Gaṅgas are instances of this kind.

Assessment III

The foregoing accounts have endeavoured to show that Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḻudi is to be identified with the Pāṇḍya king Rājasimha I, who gifted Vēḷvikuḍi to Naṛkoṟṟan and that Parāntaka Neduñjaḍaiyan, the son and successor of Rājasimha re-granted the same village to the same donee. This clearly means that the Kaḷabhras should have overrun the Pāṇḍyan terrain during the time of Rājasimha and a major part of the occupied area should have been retrived by this King himself. Presumbly this king died and his son Parāntaka Neduñjaḍaiyan came to the throne. Naṛkoṟṟan appealed to this king for the return of the gift



KALABHRA INTERREGNUM (Map I) *(to face Page 100)*

and the king in turn re-granted it. These events are in full agreement with the highly significant guess made by Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935) that the restoration of Vēḷvikuḍi was "not far removed from A.D. 769/70 which is the date ascribed to him (Parāntaka Neduñjaḍaiyan) by the Epigraphist."

When the inscription is read with this background, some valuable clues float to the surface and these are helpful to resolve the nature and number of the *ādhirājas* involved in the term *aḷavariya* and the expanse of land occupied (*akal-iḍam*) by the Kaḷabhras. The *ādhirājas* were no other than the Pāṇḍya chieftains exercising strategic control from important places like Madurai, Karūr, Woṛaiyūr, etc.; thus the total number of the *ādhirājas* that succumbed to the Kaḷabhras could not have exceeded four or five.

Karūr, Woṛaiyūr, Solavandān and Madurai constitute roughly the corner points of the *akal-iḍam*, the total area representing a comparatively small part of the Pāṇḍya kingdom. It should be emphatically stated that there is not even a thread of evidence in the inscription to presume that more than one dynasty of South India were affected by the Kaḷabhra invasion; the Cōḷas, Cēras or the Pallavas do not come into the picture in this context.

Dynastic affinities of the Kaḷabhras

The basic data employed in discussions dealing with the affinities and whereabouts of the Kaḷabhras have been solely drawn from Tamiḻ literature. An attempt to utilize the epigraphical sources in combination with information provided by literature is seen only in the contribution of Venkataraman (1956/7). The results of these studies over a period of 60 years have produced an unusually wide variety of opinions that fall under two major categories,—those that consider the Kaḷabhras as belonging to the Tamiḻ stock and those that deny such an alliance.

(a) Tamiḻ alliance

Gopinatha Rao (1919/20) identified a Muttaraiyan by name Śuvaran Māran *alias* Perumpiḍugu Muttaraiyan with the one who is said to have been an ally of the Pallavas and who was one of those connected with the coronation of Nandivarman II

Pallavamalla. This Muttaraiyan chief is styled 'the Kaḷvan of Kaḷvans'. The author commented that "Kaḷvan" which now mean's a thief, must have been held in high esteem, in older times," and assumed the contemporaniety of Kaḍuṅkōn and this Muttaraiyan at a period prior to the Kaḷabhra incursion. Gopinatha Rao was thus led to think that the Muttaraiyan was the Kaḷvan Kaḷabhran who invaded the Pāṇḍya territory. Nilakanṭa Sastri (1929) did not agree with this equation. Furthermore, it should also be noted that there is much to be desired in our understanding of the origin and history of the Muttaraiyars and it is too premature to identify Śuvaran Māran with the Muttaraiyan connected with Nandivarman Pallavamalla.

In a rather diffuse and meandering argument involving very little factual data, and largely drawing from literary sources, Rajamanikkam (1944) revived Gopinatha Rao's opinions: in addition, he also brought in the chief of Koḍumbāḷūr into the Kaḷabhra alliance. In so doing he made certain *a priori* assumptions such as: the 'northern Karunāṭaka' king mentioned in the *Periapurāṇam* is the same as the Kali araśan of the Vēḷvikuḍi charter and therefore he should have been a Kaḷabhra; Kūṛṛuva Nāyanār of the *Periapurāṇam* was a Kaḷabhra; the Kaḷabhras migrated from Aruvā-vaḍatalai region and occupied the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, etc. Govindasamy (1965) also feels that Muttaraiyars and Koḍumbāḷūr chiefs represent branches of the Kaḷabhras. It should be observed that these views are involved in unwarranted suppositions and assertions and that the dynastic histories and affinities of these clans themselves need detailed study and clarification.

Srinivasa Iyengar (1929) was convinced that Aççuta Vikkanta mentioned by Buddhadatta was a Kaḷabhra and that he was identical with Aççuda Kaḷappāḷan of the *Tamiḻ Nāvalar Caritai*. In the latter work it is said that this king imprisoned the kings of the Cōḷa, Cēra and Pāṇḍya dynasties and that each one of them addressed the Kaḷabhra king in verses. Srinivasa Iyengar argues that the king Kaḷappāḷan and therefore the Kaḷappāḷars = Kaḷabhras were of Tamilian origin. His declaration that "The Kaḷappāḷas

were Tamiḻ chieftains, as is proved by the fact that the three Rajas sang to them in Tamiḻ" is absurd although amusing.

Raghava Aiyangar (1930 a), unlike Srinivasa Iyengar, equated Açcuta Vikkanta of Buddhadatta with the person of similar name occurring in the *Periapurāṇam.* He identified the Kaḷabhras with Veḷḷāḷas, equated Kaḷabhras with Kaḷappāḷars and suggested that the Kaliaraśan of the Vēḷvikuḍi charter bears similarity to the extent of identity with Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār of *Tiruttoṇḍattokai.* While referring to Raghava Aiyangar's studies, Nilakanta Sastri (1929) felt that these were plausible suggestions with much potential. Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935), on the other hand, offered his own comments on the views expressed by Raghava Aiyangar and questioned the authenticity of the identification of different individuals bearing euphonically similar names in reference to Açcuta.

Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935) drew attention to a specific area, Kāñchi and Pulicat latitudes which was under the rule of a chieftain whose headquarters was Tirupati. The chieftain is referred to as Kaḷvar-kōman Puḷḷi, the king or chieftain of the Kaḷavar as found in some poems of *Puṛanāṉūṛu.* He postulated that these Kaḷvars=Kaḷavars were dislodged from their position, moved southwards to "Kāñchi and then into the territory of the Malayamān and his neighbours in the middle, and then into the country of the Cōḷa, extending into that of the Pāṇḍyas ultimately......This Kaḷavar or Kaḷar migration seems what is destribed in Sanskrit as the Kaḷabhra interregnum." This view has been accepted by Sathianathaier (1954) as being "most satisfactory". Vaiyapuri Pillai (1956) and Soundara Rajan (1968) also are in tune with it. However, we have already seen that there is no basis to include the Cōḷa terrain under the Kaḷabhra occupation. Serious doubts have also been raised whether *Puṛanāṉūṛu* (of the 'Caṅkam age') is speaking of incidents of a period as early as that of the initial centuries of the Christian era or of events of a much later period. Thirdly, the identity of Kaḷvar/Kaḷavar with Kaḷabhra is far fetched.

The Vēḷvikuḍi plates refer to Kaḍuṅkōn as a hero who destroyed the 'shining cities" (*oḷi-nagar=aḷitta*). Mahalingam

(1969) suspected a pun on the word *oḷi* which "in addition to the ordinary meaning of light and splendour, also denotes a territorial division and the people living in it." Taking the latter sense, the author asks: "Is it likely that the oḷiyar were the same as the Kaḷabhras of the Naga lineage?" This suggestion is based on the assumption that Kaḍuṅkōn drove away the Kaḷabhras. But, as observed earlier, this ruler was not the one who resumed the territory.

Sadasiva Pandarattar (1969) argues that as Varāhamihira does not mention the Kaḷabhras as a dynasty of rulers in South India and as the 'Caṅkam' works fail to refer to them, the Kaḷabhras should represent a clan who invaded the Pāṇḍya country somewhere from the north of South India. However, he does not indicate their home or identity in a more restricted sense.

(b) Non-Tamiḻ alliance

On the basis of information scattered in some of the Tamiḻ literary works of the medieval period (*Periapurāṇam, Tiruviḷaiyādal purāṇam, Kallādam*), Venkayya (1908) suggested that the incident referring to Mūrthi Nāyanār was indicative of the Kaḷabhra occupation; he offered a "conjectural location of Kaḷabhras in the Kanarese country", because Mūrti Nāyanār is said to be a Karnāṭa king. Subramaniam (1921/2) also expressed a similar opinion. Nilakanṭa Sastri (1929) categorically denied the existence of any clues in the *Puraṇās* to identify the Karnāṭakas with the Kaḷabhras; he also objected to the identity of the Kaḷabhra with the Erumaiyūran. Furthermore, there is also the open question as to what extent one can depend on the *purāṇas* of moral and religious import to draw historical materials.

Jambunathan (1928) assumed that Accuta Vikrama of Buddhadatta was a Kadamba ruler. Srinivasa Aiyangar (1929) drew attention to the mistaken reading of Kalabba as Kalamba (sounding similar to Kadamba) by the editor of the text of *Vinayavinicchaya* of Buddhadatta. Saletore (1936), obviously unaware of these reference, suggested in purely casual manner that the Kaḷabhras could be identified as the Kadambas. At about the same period

Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935) ruled out the equation Kaḷamba = Kadamba as being historically unsound. Yet the philological temptation has remained alive. Aççuta Vikkanta of the Pāli text is taken to be a king belonging to the Kadamba dynasty; and the name-similarity has been carried so far as to suggest a Kalamba/Kalabba alliance to the Vijayanagar king Achuta Raja! (Jain, 1968). The Kadamba-Kaḷabhra alliance is untenable mainly because the Kadamba domains did not extend southward beyond the eleventh parallel.

Arokiaswami (1954) proposed an elaborate thesis on the origin of the Vēḷḷāḷas in north India, their southward route of migration, and their occupation of the Tamiḻ country where the three "crowned kings" held sway. He visualized that there were constant conflicts between the indigenous rulers on the one hand and the new settlers on the other. He thought that "the consummate effort (of the latter) against the ruling houses" is what has been designated as "Kaḷabhra interregnum", Two years later, however, he changed his opinion and suspected whether the Kaḷabhras could not be the Reṭṭi tribe which suddenly appeared in the Koṅgu country through Karnāṭaka/Mysore region (1956). He further identified Mūrthi Nāyanār as a ruler of this clan. As he himself admits, our knowledge of the Reṭṭis is next to nothing; we do not know where they came from or when. Under these circumstances his views cannot be taken seriously. Furthermore, we see that he does not substantiate his views in later writings. On the other hand, in 1967, he replaced Reṭṭis with Mauryas, with much less confidence in himself.

An approach to an analysis of the Kaḷabhra problem largely from epigraphic angle is seen in the study of Venkataraman (1956/7). Utilizing the material contained in some of the inscriptions scattered in the Mysore State, the author placed the original home of the Kaḷabhras round about Sravanabeḷagoḷa; thereupon they were supposed to have migrated eastwards and established a kingdom including Kōlār, Baṅgalore and Chittor districts and this unit as a whole was called Kalināḍu or Kaḷavarnādu, indicative of their Kali-kula and of their original home Kaḷavappu (Sravana-

beḷagoḷa) respectively. They then occupied the territories of Pallavas (Toṇḍaināḍ), of Cōḻas and of Pāṇḍyas. He also felt that "more than one family (of Kaḷabhras) ruled over the Tamilnad":—"Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār, the king of Kalandai; Aççuta Vikkanta of the Cōḻa country (who patronized Buddhism) mentioned by Buddhadatta and also figuring in *Yāpparuṅkalakkārikkai*; and the chief who occupied Madurai (a Jaina). Venkataraman's arguments for a Kali-kula having existed in the Karnāṭaka area are rather weak, as in every case the substitute 'valourous' for *kali* would equally fit the context; the reasons that he has provided for the recognition of a Kali are based solely on Jaina tradition; the relationships of the Kali-cult with either Kali-kula or Kali-era are not yet clear. Even granting that the Kali-kings were an historical dynasty, it is difficult to reconcile their location in the Sravanabeḷagoḷa area on the similarity of Kalināḍ/Kaḷavaranāḍ. with Kaḷvappunāḍ. Further more, the name Kalvappu in reference to Sravanabeḷagola area occurs for the first time in the epigraphs of the early eighth century (Chidananda Murthy, 1966), while the Kaḷabhra incursion into the Tamiḻ country is placed from "about the 5th century, if not earlier" by Venkataraman himself (1956/7).

(*c*) *Religion of the Kaḷabhras*

When Venkayya (1908) suggested the probable identification of the Karnāta king of *Periapurāṇam* with the Kaḷabhras, he also accepted the *purāṇic* statement that the invader king was a Jaina, who began persecuting the Śaivas. When Srinivasa Iyengar (1929) attempted to equate Aççuta Vikkanta of *Vinayaviniccaya* with the Kaḷabhras, he presumed that this king was a Buddhist. Each of these opinions in turn has acquired its own following and the disciples have not hesitated to add their own imaginative flavours to suit their taste and context. Sadasiva Pandarattar (1969). following the first of these opinions, construed that the intruders—because of their language and religious persuasions having been different from those of the Tamilians—obstructed the growth of indigenous culture. Nilakanta Sastri (1963), following the second school, suspected that "possiblv Aççuta himself was a Buddhist and the political revolution which the Kaḷabhras effected may have been provoked by religious antagonism." Pillay (1969) favoured

both the views and considered the Kaḷabhras as predatory invaders representing a "composite group consisting of Jains and Buddhists." He further added that "perhaps some Hindus also joined the invading group."

(d) Nature of the literary sources

As materials drawn from literary sources have been employed in a large measure for elucidating the affinities of the Kaḷabhras, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the period of composition of the concerned works, their subject matter and scope.

The colophon in *Vinayaviniccaya* states that this work was composed during a period contemporaneous with one Accuta Vikkanṭa of the Kaḷabhra kula. The author of the work is a Buddhist by name Buddhadatta, whose date has been placed in the fourth century A.D. by some writers (*e.g.*, Jambunathan, 1928) and in the fifth century by others *e.g.*, Pillay, 1969). The identification of Accuta Vikkanṭa with Accuta Vikrama or Accuta Vikranṭa of later Tamiḻ works and of Kaḷabhra kula with the Kaḷabhras/Kadambas/Kalambas has been presumed solely of phonetic similitude.

The same colophon also refers to the author as having lived in a place called Uragapura. This place has been variously identified as Būdalūr (Srinivasa Iyengar, 1929), Kāvēripaṭṭaṇa (Rajamanikkam, 1944), Tirunāgēśvaram (Subramaniam, 1966), Bhūtaṅkuḍi, near Pāpanāśam (Mahalingam, 1969); in addition, there is also a commonly held opinion that Woraiyūr, near Tiruchi, was also known by the name Uragapura. No doubt all these places are located along the banks of the Kāvēri and the area was under the imperial Cōḷas from the ninth century onwards. The suggeted date of Buddhadatta and the identification of Uragapura as a locale in the Cōḷa country of that period are not reconcilable with one another. There was no Cōḷa dynasty in the fourth—fifth centuries in that area; if it is construed that it was the dynasty of the Cōḷas of the so-called 'Caṅkam' age—and granting for a moment that such an age existed—then that dynasty should have become extinct around 300, A.D. The Vijayālaya line of Cōḷas commence their rule only from the ninth century A.D. and

therefore this line cannot be pushed backwards to the fourth—fifth centuries. Furthermore, there is no king by the name Accuta Vikrama or Accuta Vikranta among the rulers of either dynasties of the Cōḷas. Discrepancies such as these indicate that the identification of Uragapura in the Cōḷa country is not accurate. It is also an open question whether Accuta Vikkanṭa or its variants refer to a personal name or to an epithet meaning "a person of valour who cannot be destroyed or defeated." Whether there is convincing evidence to ascribe the authorship of the colophon to, Buddhadatta is also a matter yet to be decided. As such, the identification of Accuta Vikkanṭa as a king who occupied and ruled the Cōḷa territory should be invalidated.

Tiruttoṇḍar Tiruvantādi is presumed to have been written by Nambi-āndār-nambi. The date of this author has been placed generally in the 10th century as a contemporary of Rājarāja I (A. D. 985-1014), although some scholars of the Annamalai University (see Vellaivaranan, 1962) argue that he should have been a contemporary of Āditya I (A.D. 871-907). One stanza each is devoted to Mūrthi Nāyanār and Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār in this work. In the first case there is no reference to any king having usurped Madurai. In the second case, the stanza refers to him as "Kaḷappāḷanākiya Kūṟṟavanē". This has led Raghava Aiyangar (1930 a) to suspect if this person cannot be equated with the *Kali-araśan* of the Vēḷvikuḍi charter, "for the term Kūṟṟavan simply connotes the same idea as the expression Kaliyaraśan." It is true that *Kali* and *Kūṟṟu* possess somewhat similar connotations in the sense of destruction. But they lend themselves to be interpreted by alternative meanings as well, without endangering the context. It has been shown on a previous page that the term *kali* in the context of the Vēḷvikuḍi charter could mean 'valorous.' Similarly, the term *kūṟṟu* in the scope and context under which it is used indicates another name for Lord Śiva and appears to bear a reference to the mythological episode of the Lord kicking Yama while saving Mārkandēya. (c f. கூற்றுதைத்தோன்).

Periapurāṇam is presumed to have been composed during the reign of Kulōttuṅga III (A.D. 1178-1218). It deals with the lives

of the 63 canonized Śaiva saints, with the purpose of extolling their devotion and complete surrender to Lord Śiva. When literary form was woven around episodes that had been in currency for hundreds of years and this became superimposed with Śēkkiḻār's poetic imagination, it becomes an extremely difficult task to sift out fact from fiction, even if the narration should contain some elements of history.

Mūrthi Nāyanār's story is narrated in pious exuberance by Śēkkiḻār. He makes the hero a native of Madurai which in course of time is said to have been occupied by a king of Jaina persuasion from Karunāḍu. If only Śēkkiḻār had informed us of the name of the king who was displaced as also of the usurper, it would perhaps have been helpful in drawing some historical materials from the account. On the other hand, he has adopted in this case also the same idiom of narration as in reference to other saints—"once upon a time there lived a king......" Again, Śēkkiḻār has made use of the supernatural to place the hero on the throne of Madurai. In the history of Madurai or of the Pāṇḍya dynasty we do not know of any Mūrthi who ruled from Madurai or from the Pāṇḍya territory. When no credence is given to this incident in the history of the Pāṇḍyas, a similar attitude is perfectly justifiable in reference to the Karu-nāḍu origin of the usurper as well. The same story appears in the *Tiruviḷaiyāḍal purāṇam* and *Kallāḍam* (13th century A.D.) with very little variation. From the point of view of the aim of these works, an usurper from any other country would suit as well. For a critical student of history there are no leads in the incident that would help him to reconstruct either the history of the Pāṇḍya or of the Karnāṭaka dynasties.

The 11th century work *Yāpparuṅkalavṛtti* and *Tamiḻ Nāvalar Çaritai* of a much latter date mention an Aççuta Kaḷappāḷan who is supposed to have ruled over the whole of South India and who had imprisoned the then ruling kings of the Çēra, Çōḷa and Pāṇḍya dynasties. Srinivasa Iyengar (1929) identified this Aççuta with Aççuta Vikkanta (Kaḷabbha) of Buddhadatta. Raghava Aiyangar (1930 a) also agreed with this opinion. However, as observed by

Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935), "Aççuta Vikrama of Buddhadatta was a ruler of Chōḷarāṣṭra with his capital at Kāvēripaṭṭinam. But the Aççuta under reference in literature is one associated with the hill named Nandi and must be held to have ruled what was the Gaṅga territory of Kolār." As already stated, there is genuine doubt if the colophon of Buddhadatta's work was written by the author himself, or more likely, by some one else later. In reference to the literary references under consideration, it should be remembered that they were composed several centuries after the Kaḷabhra invasion by which time facts had become shrouded in inseparable legends. Under these circumstances it is not advisible to look upon these Aççutas and Kaḷappāḷans as representing genuine historical persons.

Serious inconsistencies arise even if historicity be given to some of the Aççutas mentioned in literature. For example, Aççuta Vikrama of Buddhadatta is said to have been ruling from Kāvēripaṭṭinam, a place identified in the then Cōḷa country: the Aççuta Kaḷappaḷan is said to have occupied the Pāṇḍya, Cēra Cōḷa countries; at the same time, this king is said to have ruled from "Southern Tillai" which has been presumed to be the region of modern Çidambaram in South Ārcot district; and this king has also been equated with Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār of *Periapurāṇam*! It should be emphasized here that the Vēḷvikuḍi grant categorically says that it was only a small part of the Pāṇḍya territory that was occupied by the Kaḷabhras and that *ādhirājas* other than those of the Pāṇḍya dynasty were not involved.

(*e*)* *Coins of the Kaḷabhras*

Recently claims for the discovery of the coinage issued by the Kaḷabhras have been put forth (Ramayya, 1970, 1970 a, b). One of the coins is stated have been obtained from a fisherman at Kāvēripūmpaṭṭinam (1970) and two others from Madurai area (1971 a, b). The former and one of the latter (1971 b) are stated to show some letters of the Brahmi script of the fourth century A.D.; they have been read respectively as 'ka ḷa bra' and 'ka ḷa va ra'. The obverse of the first coin is said to depict what appears as a "Buddhist chaitya with a dome and a

spire on the top", and "on its right there appears to be a tree in railing"; the figure on the obverse of the second coin has been interpreted to represent Vināyaka. The reverse of the third coin (1971 a) also contains the scripts of the same kind which have been reads as 'kaḷabara' the *La* in this case being the largest and put sideways; the iconic representation on the reverse is believed to represent Muruga.

The find, in itself, is no doubt interesting. Yet one would wish more decisive information had been made available about the 'discovery' itself. Procurement of antiquities from fisher-folk and from 'somewhere' from Madurai area does not provide scientific authority in contrast to *in situ* finds, particularly in the case of numismatic objects. The somewhat different readings of the script on the three coins—all of them presumed to belong to the fourth century A.D.—add a further element of doubt whether there could be that extent of variability in writing presumably of one and the same name composed of mere three or four letters.

In spite of the startling conclusions reached by the author, many of his basic assumptions are wholly unwarranted: "When the Satavāhanas collapsed, domiciled Saka, abhira and allied warrior bands from the north gravitated South in search of employment, adventure and loot"; "The Pallavas probably egged them on to go down further south as they would be a nuisance to them, in the Kāñchi area" (1970). "The Kaḷabhras were war bands from the North and the Deccan, made up of old Kshatriya clans like Yaudheyas, Malavas and domiciled foreign invaders like Sakas, abhiras, etc., all mixed up and completely Indianised". In other words, the author has assumed the very points which he has to prove. In any case, there does not appear to be any convincing arguments or proofs to refer the coins to the Kaḷabhras. The script as well as the motifs are likely to provide alternative interpretations should they be re-examined from an objective approach.

Assessment IV

Certain words and proper names mentioned in the Vēḷvikuḍi charter (8th century A.D.) bear phonetic similitude to the ones

occurring in Tamiḻ literature of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. and also in a Pāli text, presumed to have been composed in the fifth century A.D. These instances have been freely drawn into discussions bearing on the dynastic affinities of the Kaḷabhras. It is unfortunate that fact and fiction have become dove-tailed in varying degrees and proportions throughout the discussions and has resulted in a notorious variety of opinions. Neither the proposals to identify the Kaḷabhras as belonging to the Tamiḻ stock nor those referring them to outside agencies have provided any conclusive convincing results. While the sincerity of the authors who have contributed towards the clarification of the problem is beyond question, their anxiety to 'solve' the problem, however, is invariably surcharged with uncritical acceptance of source materials.

The Kaḷabhras have been identified with the Muttaraiyars, the Koḍumbāḷūr chiefs, the Kaḷḷars, the Vēḷḷāḷas, the Kadambas, the Kaḷavars, the Oḷiya-nāgas, the Reṭṭis, the Karnāṭakas, the Kali dynasty; their religious affinities have been suggested to be with Buddhism, Jainism, and also Hinduism; the *kali-araśan* of the Vēḷvikuḍi charter has been tallied with the Aççutas and Kaḷappāḷans of later literary sources. It is significant, however, that none of these opinions or suggestions have helped us to place the Kaḷabhras in a correct historical perspective. The problem that posed itself 60 years ago has remained in desperate *status quo* to date. The recent reports on the discovery of Kaḷabhra coins are purely subjective judgements. An unbiassed critical approach is needed to assess their identity and affinity.

PROSPECT

The inferences drawn from the fore-going discussion may be set forth under two categories:

(*a*) *Negative inferences*

Naṟkoṟṟan, the donee of the Vēḷvikuḍi gift, did not enjoy the benefits for a long time after having received it from Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḻudi, nor were the benefits enjoyed by his descendents; the donee did not have to wait through six generations of kings to reclaim the original benefits.

The Kaḷabhras did not occupy the entire Pāṇḍya dominion; nor did they encroach upon the territories of the Cōḷas or Cēras; the *ādhirājas* who succumbed to the enemy did not include dynasties other than the Pāṇḍya.

The Kaḷabhras were not in possession of their occupied land for one to three centuries; they did not invade the Pāṇḍya country at the close of the so-called 'Caṅkam age'; they were not responsible for the termination of this age.

Kaḍuṅkōn was not the Pāṇḍya ruler who retrieved the territory from the hands of the Kaḷabhras.

The Kaḷabhras do not belong to any of the dynastic alliances suggested so far. The proposed philological derivations of the word Kaḷabhra are wholly unsatisfactory.

The coins attributed to the Kaḷabhras do not seem to belong to them.

(*b*) *Positive inferences*

Palyāgaśālai Mudukuḍumi Peruvaḷudi is no other than Tēr Māran, who in turn has been identified with Rājasimha I. This king was the donor of Vēḷvikuḍi to Naṟkoṟṟan. The Kaḷabhras overr-an this village during their southward march in the reign of Rājasimha, sometime after he instituted the *brahmadēya* gift. And Rājasimha himself drove away the intruders and possibly died soon after the encounters.

His son, Parāntaka Neḍuñjaḍaiyan succeeded to the throne, who, in response to the appeal preferred by the donee Naṟkoṟṟan, re-granted the village.

Thus, the duration of the Kaḷabhra occupaiion of a part of the Pāṇḍya country was confined to a few years during the regnal years of Rājasimha himself (middle of the eighth century A.D.)

The limits of the Pāṇḍya terrain under the temporary occupation by the Kaḷabhras were, the modern Karūr and Woraiyūr along the Kāvēri in the north, and Sōḻavandan and Madurai in the South; the western boundary lay along the line joining Karūr and Sōḻa-

vandan while the eastern passed through Koḍumbāḷūr and a few other places of the erstwhile Pudukkōṭṭai State between Woṛaiyūr and Madurai.

Identification of the Kaḷabhras

With the summary of conclusions reached thus far as given above, the identity and relationships of the Kaḷabhras may now be re-considered.

(*a*) *A commentary on the term Kaḷabhras.*

(i) (Tam.) Kaḷvan/Kaḷvara > (Skt.) Kaḷabhra.

Gopinatha Rao (1919/20) suggested this derivation on the analogy of Vaḷavan > Vaḷabha. Nilakanta Sastri (1929) has rightly pointed out that the genealogy "is not equal" and also referred to the impossibility of this method of derivation.

(ii) (Tam.) Kaḷvra/Kaḷavara > (Kan.) kaḷabharu > (Skt.) Kaḷabhra.

Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935) proposed this sequence on the basis of the identification of the Kaḷabhras with Kaḷḷars. The Kannaḍa form suggested would be more likely Kaḷabara and not Kaḷabharu. Furthermore, there is no word in the Kannaḍa language as indicated in the intermediary.

(iii) (Tam.) Kaḷappa/Kaḷappāḷar > (Pāli) Kaḷabbha (Skt.) Kaḷabhra.

Although this sequence formulated by Srinivasa Iyengar (1929) may appear to be technically sound, there is equal possibility for reading it in the reverse direction. Furthermore, there is no valid basis to take Tamiḻ Kaḷappa as the starting point.

(iv) (Tam.) Kaḷavar > (Kan.) Kaḷabar > (Skt.) Kaḷabhra (Tam.) Kaḷappirar.

This sequence (Rajamanikkam, 1944) is the same as the one mentioned in (ii) above, but the Tamiḻ Kaḷappirar is presumed to have been derived from its Samskṛt parent, which in turn, had a Tamiḻ parent.

It is thus seen that all the above authors have preferred to assume the Tamiḷ form as the starting point. However, in none of the concerned inscriptions we see these forms having been used to refer unequivocally to the Kaḷabhras. The Pallava and Chālukya epigraphs give the uniform reading Kaḷabhra in the Samskṛt part. Of the Pāṇḍya copper-plate inscriptions, the Vēḷvikuḍi epigraph retains the same form in the Tamiḷ part while the Dalavāypuram script appears to give the reading Kaḷappāḷar. The last mentioned charter happens to be the latest epigraph (A.D. 887) to speak of the Kaḷabhras and the variant version of the word here may perhaps be due to the peculiarity of the script of this period or to the corrupted form of pronunciation.

Therefore, the unmodified version of the word clearly belongs to the Samskṛt language and it should be taken as such for elucidation. Kaḷabha in Samskṛt means a young elephant. The addition of the suffix *bhṛ* (Kaḷabha-bhṛ) implies a sense of closeness of context to the elephant.—'of the elephant', 'intimately connected with the elephant'. The dropping out of the latter *bha* yields the form Kaḷabhṛ.

It is well known that the elephant was the crest for the Gaṅgas and Sēndrakas, and for the former the same symbol appeared on their flags as well. The Sēndrakas always held a "subordinate position in the Nagarakhanda division of the Banavasi province, at first under the Kadambas and then under the Chalukyas" (Nilakanta Sastri, 1960). Therefore, this family could not have come into contact with the Pāṇḍyas or Pallavas. On the other hand, the Gaṅgas (Western), with their long history extending from the beginning of the fifth century, and their dominion involving the borderlines of the Pāṇḍya, Pallava and Chālukya territories practically all through their early history appear to have been referred to in the concerned inscriptions by an epithet chosen after the royal crest of the invaders.

It now remains to examine to what extent the new identification proposed here is in accord with the information contained in epigraphic literature. It should, however, be borne in mind that much more critical data is necessary to draw categorical conclu-

sions. Large tracts of the Gaṅga and Chālukya territories are yet to be systematically explored for new inscriptional data and some of the old inscriptions are in need of more critical re-reading and transcription Under such limitations all that can be achieved is only to give a sort of broad outline of the probable story—as a provisional measure—leaving the picture necessarily in a somewhat blurred pattern. Modifications in the outline or filling in the details can be taken up only when new data become available.

(*b*) *Pāṇḍyas and Kaḷabhras/Gaṅgas*

Two Pāṇḍyan inscriptions, Vēḷvikuḍi (EI. XVII. No. 16) and Dalavāypuram (TASSI, 1962-65, pp. 1-31) mention Kaḷabhras. There appears to be general agreement that these respectively belong to the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. although Nilakanta Sastri (1963) is inclined to place the former also in the ninth century.

The Dalavāypuram charter of Parāntaka Vīra Nārāyaṇa Pāṇḍya attributes the victory over the Kaḷabhras to one of his ancestors in a purely routine manner in the same way as other achievements—including mythological and legendary—are treated. The Vēḷvikuḍi charter specifically mentions the king who re-occupied the territory that had been lost to the Kaḷabhras. He has been identified in the earlier part of the present study as Rājasimha I (Tēr Māran). This king is said to have established relationship with a Gaṅgarāja. That this was a marriage relationship is clear from the exploits of Mārangāri, the *aṇatti* of the charter, who fought against the Gaṅgas and on the occasion secured the daughter of Gaṅgarāja and offered her to the Pāṇḍya king, "Koṅgarkōn", that is, Rājasimha.

The desire to possess the Koṅgu country appears to have been a long cherished plan of the Pāṇḍyas and perhaps the reverse was true of the Gaṅgas as well. From the time of the Gaṅga king Durvinīta (555-605 A.D.) parts of the modern Coimbatore and bordering Salem districts constituting Punnāṭa was in the control of the Gaṅgas (Arokiaswami, 1956); in fact, Durvinīta is called the "Lord of Punnāṭa". Śivamāra (680-725) divided the

kingdom into different units and distributed them amongst the members of the royal family; one such unit came into the hands of Śrīpuruṣa. This line of Gaṅgas appears to have allied itself with the Chālukyas and opposed the westward incursions of the Pallavas and northward incursions of the Pāṇḍyas. Fights between the Gaṅgas (either with or without Chālukyan alliance) and Pāṇḍyas along the borderline were of frequent occurrence.

Śrīpuruṣa was the Gaṅga contemporary of Rājasimha I. It must be during one of these encounters that the Gaṅga king wielded the upper hand and overran a part of the northern border areas of the Pāṇḍya territory, causing destruction of some of the towns and forts. Rājasimha lost no time in repairing and rebuilding the badly hit ramparts at Madurai, Karūr and Woṛaiyūr. Then he marched on to reconquer the land that had been occupied by the Gaṅgas (Kaḷabhra). The composer of the Vēḷvikuḍi grant has described this exploit of Rājasimha with great gusto. Several of the places mentioned lie in the Pudukōṭṭai-Tanjāvūr-Tiruchi areas. He did not stop at this but crossed the river Kāvēri and advanced in the northwest direction into the Koṅgu country which was at that time being ruled by the Gaṅgas. He subdued them and even occupied Pāṇḍikkoḍumuḍi, obviously with the intention of putting an end to their possible repeat attacks on the Pāṇḍya territory. It is at this juncture that he entered into a matrimonial alliance with the Gaṅga kings by marrying a princess from their house. As if celebrating this victorious campaign, he performed "countless" *gōsahasras*, *hiraṇyagarbhas* and *tulābhāras* and in a mood of thanks-giving "prostrated at and worshipped the lotus feet of Paśupati" at Pāṇḍikkoḍumuḍi.

(c) *Pallavas and Kaḷabhras/Gaṅgas*

The Kāsakuḍi plates (SII, II, No. 73) of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla issued in A D. 753 mention that Simhaviṣṇu destroyed his enemy, the Kaḷabhras, among others. That the Gaṅga king Durvinīta was a contemporary of Simhaviṣṇu is evidenced both by epigraphical and literary sources (Subramaniam, 1966; Mahalingam, 1969). Fights and intrigues between the Gaṅgas and Pallavas, with their territories positioned adjacent to each other,

had already commenced during this period. This is evidenced from the records of the Gaṅgas also. It is stated that Durvinīta became victorious over a Kāḍuveṭṭi ruler who "shone like an image of Rāvaṇa" (EC. VIII. Nagar 35). The Sirgunda inscription (EC. VI. Chikmagalur 50) informs us that the younger son of Nirvinīta was enthroned by a Kāḍuveṭṭi. This could have been possible subsequent to the occupation of some part of the Gaṅga country by the Pallava, thereby establishing the newly acquired land under the rule of the enemy king as a subordinate.

The details of the Pallava-Chālukya-Gaṅga relationships in the middle of the seventh century are yet to be clarified. In any case, it is clear that the Gaṅga relationship with the Pallava Narasimhavarman I was not on friendly terms. The Kūram plates of Paramēśvaravarman I (SII. I. No. 151) mention Kaḷabhras as one of the enemies conquered by Narasimhavarman. This Gaṅga kings Polavīra (A.D. 629-644) and Srīvikrama (A.D. 644-669) were the contemporaries of Narasimhavarman, who is said to have conquered the Kaḷabhras repeatedly. Although the Gaṅga records of this period are not eloquent about their encounters with the Pallavas, they do imply a not too friendly relationship. It appears to be certain that "Gaṅgavaḍi was harnessed by the invading armies of the Pallavas" (Krishna Rao, 1936). Some *Virakkals* (hero-stones) of this period in the Gaṅga territory refer to a battle between Gaṅgas and Pallavas fought at Kovalāla (Kolar) (MAR. 1910, p. 16; EC. IX. Hosakote 21, 22). Whether the Pallavas were victorious is, however, not certain. As Kolār and Tumkur districts were still in the hands of the Gaṅgas during the reign of Śrīpuruṣa, either the Pallavas should have been driven out or, if they had been successful, it should have been a provisional one. It is interesting to note in this connection that the Gaṅgas of this period had already split themselves into at least two branches. One branch, headed by Śrīvikrama, continued to represent the main line and took the side of the Chālukyas in fighting agains the Pallavas. The other, led by Muṣkara or/and Polavīra, detached itself and fought the Chālukyas as an ally of the Pallavas.

Mutual enmity between the Gaṅgas and Pallavas continued in the time of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (A.D. 731–796). His earlier regnal years were largely spent in suppressing his internal rivals and external opportunists (Mahalingam, 1969). The Puḷḷūr and Paṭṭamaṅgalam plates issued by him respectively in A.D. 763 and A.D. 792 give long lists of the enemies whom he is supposed to have conquered. Whether all these encounters represent actual victories or routine hyperboles of the composers is difficult to judge. The Puḷḷūr plates (EI. XXXVI. No. 20) refer both to the Kaḷabhras and Gaṅgas as parties conquered by Nandivarman. If this is taken to be a fact, then it is likely that the Kaḷabhras should represent the Pallava-opponent branch of the Gaṅgas, that is, the main line itself. The Paṭṭamaṅgalam plates (EI. XVIII. No. 14) do not refer to the Gaṅgas but only to the Kaḷabhras.

The regnal years of the Gaṅga king Śrīpuruṣa (A.D. 728–788) overlaps to a large extent the period of Nandivarman. The Tāṇḍanttoṭṭam plates (SII. II. No. 99) issued by the latter king record that he snatched a bejewelled necklace called Ugrodaya from a Gaṅga ruler. Although this inscription does not refer to the name of the king, the surmise that it should have been Śrīpuruśa cannot be far-fetched. It is also possible that when the Chālukya king Vikramāditya II was fighting against Nandivarman II Pallavamalla, a branch of the Gaṅgaṣ helped the Chālukyas; a side effect of this encounter was the minor battles between the Gaṅga and Pallava armies and it is probable that the Gaṅgas were defeated during such encounters.

Thus from a broad point of view it is clear that from the time of Simhaviṣṇu and Durvinīta, for a period of nearly 200 years through Nandivarman Pallavamalla and Śrīpuruṣa, the Pallava-Gaṅga relationships were by no means cordial. Although a minor branch of the Gaṅgas aligned itself with the Pallavas, the major branch was continuously involved in opposing the Pallavas either singly or in alliance with the Western Chālukyas. During some of these encounters the Pallavas were the victors, but that the Gaṅgas also should have been in the same category

on some occasions cannot be denied. It may also be noted that the record references to the Kaḷabhra in the Pallava inscriptions relate to different generations of the Gaṅgas—Durvinīta Polavīra and Srīvikrama, and Śrīpuruṣa; also, that the locale of encounters varied in all likelihood.

(*d*) *Western Chālukyas and Kaḷabhras/Gaṅgas*

The Nerūr copper plates of Vijayāditya (IA. IX. p. 127) mentions that Vikramāditya I conquered the Kaḷabhras along with the Pāṇḍyas, Cōḷas and others. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Pulakēśin I (IA. XIX. p. 7) no doubt informs us that Kīrtivarman I subdued the Gaṅgas and Āḷupas. The Gaṅga contemporary of Kīrtivarman was Durvinīta and his records do not bear any testimony of his having been subjugated by the Chālukyas. The truth of the incidents mentioned in these inscriptions has been seriously doubted (Lakshminarayana Rao and Panchamukhi, 1946; Nilakanta Sastri, 1960).

Vinayāditya (Harihar grant, IA, VII. p. 301) and Kirtivarman II (Vakkaleri grant, EI, V. No. 22) also are stated to have defeated the Kaḷabhras. It is a well-documented fact that the main line of Gaṅgas were feudatories of the Chālukya power as early as the time of Pulakēśin II and their position was not different during the succeding periods. The Chālukyan inscriptions do not go beyond mentioning the term Kaḷabhra amongst the numerous dynasties that they claim to have subjugated. On the Gaṅga side also there is no corroborative evidence to presume that they were actually defeated by the Chālukyas. Although there appears to be a vague suggestion in the Gaṅga history that Muṣkara and Polavīra could have entered into conflict with the Chālukyas, confirmatory evidence is lacking. Under these circumstances, until more positive evidence becomes available, the Chālukyan claims of having subjugated the Gaṅgas are to be looked upon largely as "embellishments by court poets which should be considered as such by the historian, and not treated as serious records of facts" (Nilakanta Sastri, 1960).

(e) Kadambas and Kaḷabhōras/Gaṅgas

The Halmidi inscription of Kākutsavarman (MAR. 1936, No. 16) describes the donor as the enemy of Kaḷabhōra. The Government Archaeologist writes that "the name (kaḷabhōra) is not clearly visible and the reading of the three middle letters is doubtful. The nearest reading possible is Kaḷabhōranā which is the genetive for the ruler of Kaḷabhōra which may be identified with Kaḷabhra." It is unfortunate that there is no other record of the Kaḍambas which mentions this word and as such there is no provision for verifying the reading. However, even if the word is presumed to refer to the Kaḷabhras, there is no necessity to assume that it denotes a territory as proposed by the Government Archaeologist. On the contrary, if Kaḷabhōra/Kaḷabhra is indicative of a dynasty, than we may not be far wrong in implying that Kākutsavarman was an enemy of the Gaṅgas.

(f) A note on the Kaḷappāḷars

The chronologically late nature of the literary references to the Kaḷappāḷars has already been referred to. By the time the authors composed their respective works, a couple of centuries had passed away after the Gaṅga incursion into the Pāṇḍya territory by which time the incident lingered on as a hazy legend. The poets superimposed their imagination on the contemporary legends, created new names of kings, fabricated events and successfully wove stories bearing a semblence to historicity. It is unfortunate that students of history should have uncritically accepted these sources as the starting point for the resolution of the Kaḷabhra problem. In result, as we have seen, the cart has been placed before the horse, thereby obstructing the venue for the identification of the Kaḷabhras.

The only historical element in all the literary sources appears to be the vague references to some exotic stock of people called Kaḷappāḷars who were in occupation of certain part of the Tamiḷakam during some remote period. If the problem is approached with Kaḷabhra as the starting point, it becomes clear that they were no other than the Gaṅgas. In course of time, the Samskṛt word Kaḷabhra became corrupted in the Tamiḷ literary idiom as Kaḷappāḷar.

After the Kaḷabhras/Gaṅgas were driven out of the occupied territory by Rājasiṁha I, it is likely that a few of them stayed on in the Tamiḻakam for generations and the descendents were designated as Kaḷappar or Kaḷappāḷar by the indigenous people. The descendents soon merged themselves with the Tamilians so completely, that their original Gaṅga identity was lost. The odium attached to them is solely due to the misinterpretation of certain words and incidents occurring in the Vēḷvikuḍi charter, and also to the purely fanciful stories created by the authors of *Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai* and *Tamiḻ Nāvalar Caritai*. Having full faith on such misleading data Doraswami Pillai (1968) has offered ponderous and puerile arguments to deny the Kaḷabhra-ancestry of Meykkaṇḍār, the author of Śivagñānabōdam. If it is true that Aççuta Kaḷappāḷar was the father of Meykkaṇḍār, then nothing is gained by denying that he was of Gaṅga infiltration. The personal names, Kaḷappāḷan, Kaḷappāḷappillai, etc., and place names like Kaḷappāḷarmēḍu, are nothing but the relics of stray instances of the Gaṅgas in the Tamiḻnād.

Impact of the "Kaḷabhra interregnum"

Naṛkoṛṛan, the recipient of the village Vēḷvikuḍi "who had never transgressed from the path of *Śrutis*" was the one who suffered the worst by losing the enjoyment of the grant following the Kaḷabhra occupation. When opportunity arose, he complained to the king about the injustice to which he was subjected. This he did in a tone overcome with emotion. Although such an act may appear to reflect a lack of restraint on a strict follower of *Śrutis*, his reference to the intruders was by no means vituperative; with dignity he called them 'fearless'. However, advantage is taken of some wrongly translated words of the Vēḷvikuḍi inscription by modern authors to permanently condemn the Kaḷabhras as being wicked cruel, ignoble, evil, etc.

Until the nineteen forties, the "Kaḷabhra interregnum" was looked upon as just one of the little known events in the history of Tamiḻakam, and none of the authors indulged themselves in discussing the after effects of the interregnum. All efforts of the students of history were largely directed towards elucidating the

dynastic affinities of the intruders. Krishnaswami Aiyangar (1935), while discussing the Kaḷabhra problem, observed that "They were people, intruders into the country of the Pāṇḍyas, who upset the order things long established......". Nilakanta Sastri had refrained himself from expressing opinions of this kind in his earlier writings; but in later years (1947-1955) offered the following prouncements: —

> ".........a mysterious and ubiquitous enemy of civilization, the evil rulers......upset the established political order......"
>
> "......the Kaḷabhras are roundly denounced as evil kings (*kali-arasar*) who uprooted many *ādhirājas* and abrogated *brahmadēya* rights.
>
> ......The Çoḷas disappeared from the Tamiḻ land almost completely in this debacle......"

The tragic consequences of such statements, which, however, we have learnt by now are baseless, is seen in the highly exaggerated and prejudiced versions propounded by subsequent writers. The Kaḷabhras were begun to be looked upon as a dynasty or clan which was wholly opposed to the culture of the Tamiḻakam; the single instance of their having abrogated Vēḷvikuḍi was magnified to mean that they destroyed all of the then existing religious endowments and institutions. Imagination was overstrained to conclude that their incursion forced in a new order. Rigmarolic woes were poured forth that, as a result, the Tamiḻ language, Tamiḻ literature, Tamiḻ music, Tamiḻ drama, Tamiḻ culture, everything Tamiḻ and everything were wiped out of existence (Doraswami Pillai, 1954, 1968; Sadasiva Pandarattar, 1957). Vigorous assertions were made that the Third Tamiḻ 'Çaṅkam' of Madurai—itself a figment of imagination—was destroyed by the Kaḷabhras; that Pāli language replaced Tamiḻ and Buddhist literature alone received encouragement (Sadasiva Pandarattar, 1957). It is unfortunate that such information is being indoctrinated into the young minds through prescribed text books (Adaikkalasami, 1968). Similar opinions, although with much reduced emphasis and involvement, have been expressed by Subrahmanian (1966) and Soundara Rajan (1968).

All this could have perhaps looked plausible only in (i) a 'Caṅkam' had been in existence during the first three centuries A.D. and (ii) the Kaḷabhras were in occupaion of the Tamiḻakam (Cēra, Cōḷa, and Pāṇḍya territories) for the next three centuries. As explained earlier, the first opinion is based on unsound and *a priori* assumptions and assertions; and the second on a series of misreadings and misconceptions of epigraphic and literary sources. The fact is that the Kaḷabhras, that is, the Gaṅgas, were frequently in military encounters against their neighbours, the Pallavas and the Pāṇḍyas. These battles were largely of the nature of borderline encroachments on either side, each holding ground of the occupied land temporarily until the counter attack of the opponent. The military marches of the Pallavas and Gaṅgas from the time of Simhaviṣṇu and Durvinīta through Nandivarman II Pallavamalla and Śrīpuruṣa were of this kind. The encounters between the Pāṇḍya Rājasimha I and the Gaṅga Śrīpuruṣa were also of a similar kind, but covered a wider extent. Yet the period of the Gaṅga occupation of the Pāṇḍya terrain was short-lived, because Rājasimha himself reclaimed the lost land by driving the Gaṅgas back into their own territory; while so doing he even encroached into the opponents dominion as far as Koḍumuḍi.

Such being the facts of the case, how could the Gaṅga invasion of a small part of the Pāṇḍya country, that too for a brief period not extending perhaps beyond a couple of years, cause the destruction of the Tamiḻ everything and everything Tamiḻ? How could they be supposed to have "upset the established political order" or implant a new culture? After all, just as the Gaṅgas, the Pāṇḍyas also were followers of Śaivism. The kings of both the dynasties patronized Brāhmanical rituals and religion; they were also tolerant towards Jainism. Both adopted Samskṛt titles and freely used this language in their inscriptions in addition to their respective regional languages. The only difference that could have caused cultural incompatibility was the Kannaḍa language of the Gaṅgas and the Tamiḻ of the Pāṇḍyas. But there is no evidence of these languages having fought with each other at any time in history.

The period of Gaṅga occupation of the Pāṇḍya land cannot be considered to have caused an interregnum. They had absolutely no part in bringing the so-called 'Caṅkam' age to an end, even if such an age ever existed at all.

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APPENDIX

(The following text of the Vēḷvikuḍi copper-plate grant is the reading given by Krishna Sastri (1923/4). The translation is almost wholly a reproduction of Krishna Sastri's rendering, excepting for the incorporation of the suggestions offered in the present study).

TEXT

First Plate

1 Śriyañ=chiraṁ vaś=śiśir-āṁśu-śēkharaś=śiva(ḥ*) śrit-
āratti-pratibandha-kāraṇam (1*) tanōtu sauvarṇṇa-kapa-

2 rdda-sundaraḥ=kudarppa-kandarppa-mada-pramarddanaḥ (1*)
viśvambharā-bhara-śrānta-śēsha-viśrama-kāraṇam (1*) ā-

3 kalp-āntam=bhuvi sthēyād=anvayaḥ=pāṇḍya-bhūbhṛitām (2*)
Astambhayat=kshiti-dharam=pravijṛimbhamāṇam=ambha-

4 s=samstam=apibaj=jaladheś=cha yas=saḥ (1*) Kumbh-
[ōdbhavō
bhavati yasya muniḥ=purōdhas=sa śrī-nidhi-

5 r-jjavati Pāṇḍya-narēndra-vaṁśaḥ (3*) Asthad-apratima-
prabhāva-mahitaḥ-Pāṇḍy-ābhidhanō nidhē-

6 r=vvāradhvāri mahīpatis=tribhuvanē līnē=pi kalpa-
kshayāt (1*) Dhātrā sṛishṭavatā punas=sa

7 jagatām rakshārttham=abhyarthitas=tējasvī tanayatvam=ētya
śaśinō nāmnā Budh=ākhyō-bhavat (4*)

Second Plate—first side

8 Putras=tasya Purūravā bhuja-bala-pradhvasta-daityaḥ=
prabhus=tad-vaṁśē Śikharīndra-mastaka-śi-

9 lā-vinyasta-matsya-dvayē (1*) Śakr-ārddh-āsana-hāra-
bhāji śaraṇē viśvāsya viśvambharā-gēha.

10 svāmini śāśvatē yudhi jit-āśēsh-āmar-āri-prabhau (5*)
Dūtībhūta-divōkasikshitidhara-kshu-

11 bdh-ābhisaṁkshōbhita-kshīr-ōdanvati Kumbha-sambhava-
kara-prāpt-ābhishēka-kriyē (1*) ishṭ-ārtth-ārppaṇa-

12 tarppit-ārtthi-janat-āpūrṇṇa-kshamā-maṇḍalē janm=
āvāpa jagatray-ārchchita-guṇa(ḥ) śrī-Māravarmmā nṛi-

13 paḥ (6*) Dharaṇī-valayaṁ samastam=ētam=nija-dōrddaṇḍa-mah-ōragṇābibhṛit (1*) aharat=sa bhu-

14 jaṁgam-ādhibhartuś=chira-kāl-ōdvahana-klaman= [dharayah (7*) Adhiruhya tulām-a-mitra-varggaṁ-yudhi ji-

Second Plate—second side

15 tv=Āmṛita-garbbhatō janitvā (1*) sudhiyām=adhipas=suvarṇṇa-rāśim vidhivat=sapratipādayām=babhūva (8*) Tasy=ā-

16 nmajas-taruṇa-bhāskara-tulya-tējā rājā babhūva Ṛaṇadhīra iti pratītaḥ (1*) yō līlay=aiva bhuvana-

17 sya babhāra bhāraṁ hāraṁ yath=āsya guravas= [suranāyakasya (9*) Putras=tasya Purandara-pratikṛitir-bhū-

18 sundarī-vallabhō namr-āśēsha-narēndra-vēshṭana-maṇi-vrāt-āvṛit-āṁghri-dvayaḥ (1*) āsīt=satya-sakhaḥ=pa-

19 rākrama-dhanaḥ=patmāsanāyāḥ=patir=vvidy-āchāra-vibhūshaṇa(ḥ) śruta-(dha)ra(ḥ) śrī-Māravarmm-ābhidhaḥ (10*) Sa Rāja-

20 siṁhas=sarasīruh-ākshō bhayam bhuvi prāṇa-bhṛitām=apāsya (1*) rarakshadakshaḥ kshapit-āri-paksha-

21 ḥ=kshamātalaṁ kshmā-patir=akshat-ājñaḥ (11*) Narō nu Rakshō nu Harōnu Pūrushaḥ-parō nu Śakrō nu

Third Plate—first side

22 sarōsham=āgataḥ (1*) iti (sma) matvā yudhi yam=bhay-ā(rddi)taḥ=(pa)lāyatē (Pallava)malla-bhūpa-

23 tiḥ (12*) Kanaka-garbbha-krita-prasavaḥ=punas=samadhiruhya tulām=atulām=api (1*) akira(t=ā)-

24 rtthan=apākṛita-kalmashō dvija-daridra-sur-āyatanē=shu yaḥ (13*) Māhākulīnām=Maḷav-ēndra-(ka)-

25 nyām sa Māravarmmā sadraśīm-uvāha (1*) ajāyat=āsyaṁ Hara-sūnu-kalpō jagad-dhitārtthañ-Jaṭi-

26 l-ābhidhāuaḥ (14*) Aśishat-sa dharām=ahina-sāraḥ-kshitipaḥ-kshālita-kalmash-ānushaṁgam (1*) natarā-

27 jaka-mauli-ranna-raśmi-prakar-ābhyarchchita-pāda-patma pīṭhaḥ (15*) Kalayē sa guṇān=adat=Kṛitasya

28 sva-bhujābhyāṁ sura-pādapa-svabhāvam (1*) abhayaṁ śaraṇāgata-prajābhyas=sa divaṁ samyati śa-

Third Plate—second side

29 tru-pārtthivēbhyaḥ (16*) Rājatāṁ sa mahīpāla-kirīṭ-ārppita-śāsanaḥ (1*) Rājasiṁha-sutō rā-

30 jā chiram=urvyām=Parāntakaḥ (17*) I-praśasti Sarvvakratu-yāji āgiya Varōdaya-Bhaṭṭanār-che-

31 yyappaṭṭadu—Kol-yāṉai-palav-ōṭṭi-kkūḍā-maṉṉar-kuḻān-tavi

32 rtta Palyāga-Mudukuḍumi-pPeruvaḻudi eṉṉum [Pāṇḍyādhirājaṉā=

33 ṉāga-mā-malar-chchōlai-naḷir-śiṉaimiśai-vaṇḍ-alambum Pāganūr-

34 kkūṟṟam-eṉṉum paḻana-kkiḍakkai-nīr-nāṭṭu-chchoṟkaṇṇāḷar-śo-

35 lappaṭṭa śrutimārggam-piḻaiyāda Koṟkai-kiḻā-Naṟkoṟṟaṉ kōṇ-

36 ḍa vēḷvi muṟṟuvikka kēḷvi-andaṇāḷar muṉbu kēṭka eṉṟ=eḍut-

Fourth Plate—first side

37 t-uraittu vēḷviśālai-muṉbu niṉṟu Vēḷvikuḍi eṉṟ=a-ppadiyai=chchī-

38 rōḍu tiru-vaḷara-chcheydār (||*) Vēndaṉ-appoḻudēy nīrōḍ-āṭṭi-kkoḍuttamai-

39 yā-nīḍu-bhukti tuttapiṉṉ (||*)=Aḷavariya ādhirājarai agala nīkki agal-iḍittai=

40 kKaḷabhraṉ-eṉṉun-Kali-araiśaṉ kaikkoṇḍ-adaṉai iṟakkiya-pin (||*) Paḍu-kaḍaṉ-muḷai

41 tta parudi-pōla Pāṇḍyādhirājaṉ veḷirpaṭṭu viḍu-kadir-avir-oli vilaga viṟṟi-

42 rundu vēlai-sūḻnda-viyal-idattu=kkōvun=kuṟumbum pāvuḍaṉ murukki-chche-

43 ṅkōl=ōchchi veṇ-kuḍai-niḻaṟ-ṟang-oḷi-niṟainda Taraṇi-maṅgaiyai-ppiṟar-

44 pāl-urimai tiravidi=ṉīkki-ttaṉpāl urimai naṉgaṉam= amaitta māṉam-pē-

45 rtta-tāṉai-vēndaṉṉ=oḍunga-maṉṉar-oḷi-nagar=aḻitta Kaḍungōṉ=eṉṉuṅ=kadi-

46 r-vēṟ-Reṉṉeṉ (||*) Maṟṟ=avaṟku magaṉ-āgi mahitalam podu-nīkki Malar-mangai(y)-o-

Fourth Plate—second side

47 ḍu maṉaṉ=ayarnda aṟṟam-il-aḍar-vēṟ-ṟāṉai-Ādhirājaṉ Avaṉichūḷāmaṇi etti-

48 ṟattum=igal-aḻikku=matta-yāṉai Māravarmman (||*) Maṟṟ-avaṟku maruv=iṉiya oru-magaṉ-ā

49 gi Maṉ-magaḷai maṟu=kkaḍindu vikramattiṉ veḷiṟpaṭṭu vilaṅgal-vēl-pe-

50 ṟi-vēndar-vēndaṉ śilai-ttaḍa-kkai=kkolai-kkaḷiṟṟu= chCheḻiyaṉ Vāṉavaṉ

51 śeṅkōṟ-Chēndaṉ (||*) Maṟṟ=avaṟku=ppaḻippu-iṉṟi vaḻi-ttōṉṟi Udayagiri-madhyama-

52 tt=uṟu-śuḍar-pōla=tteṟṟ-eṉṟu diśai naḍuṅga maṟṟ=avaṉ veḷiṟpaṭṭu-chchū

53 ḻi-yāṉai śelav=undi=pPāḻivāy=amar-kaḍandu Vilvēli-kkaḍaṟ-ṟāṉaiyai

54 Nelvēli-chcheru veṉṟum viravi-vand-aḍaiyāda Paravarai=ppāḻ-paḍut

55 tum=aṟukkāl-inam puḍai tiḷaikkuṅ-Kuṟunāṭṭavar-kulaṅ-keḍuttu-

56 ṅ-kai-nnalatta-kaḷiṟ=undi=chChennilattu-chcheru veṉṟum pār-aḷavun=

Fifth Plate—first side

57 (ta)ni-chcheṅkōṟ-Kēraḷaṉai=ppala-mu(ṟaiyum-urimai)-chchuṟṟam(ōḍ=avar-yā)ṉai-

58 (y)um puriśai-mmadiṟ-Puliyūr=ppaga-ṉāḻigai iṟa(v)āmai iga(l-ā)-

59 ḻi(y)uḷ veṉṟu koṇḍum vēl-āḻi(y)um viyaṉ-paṟambum= ēlāmai śeṉ-

60 ṟ=eṟind=aḻittum Hiraṇyagarbhamun=Tulābharamun=daraṇimiśai-ppala śey(du)

61 antaṇarkkum aśaktarkkum vand=aṇaiga eṉṟ=itt=aḻitta makarikai-aṇi-maṇi-

62 neḍu-muḍi-Arikēsari Asamasaman śrī-Māravarmman (||*) Maṟṟ-avaṟku magaṉ-āgi-kkoṟṟa-vē-

63 l valaṉ-ēndi=pporud=ūruṅ-kaḍaṟ-ṟāṇaiyai Marudūruṇ māṇb=aḻitt=Āyavē-

64 ḷai agappaḍa ey=eṉṉāmai eṟind=aḻittu-chCheṅgoḍi(y)um Pudāṉ(kō)ṭ-

65 ṭuñ-cheru veṉr-avar-śiṉan=tavirttu=kkoṅg-alarun-naṟum-poḻilvāy=kku-

66 (y)i(lo)ḍu ma(y)il=agavu-Maṅgalapuram=ennum mahā-nagaruṇ Mahāratharai e-

Fifth Plate—second side

67 ṟind=aḻitt=aṟai-kaḍal-vaḷāgam podu-moḻi agaṟṟi=chchilai(y)um puli(y)um

68 kayaluñ=cheṉṟu nilaiy-amai-neḍu-varai-iḍava(y)iṟ-kiḍāy maṇṇ=iṉid-āṇḍa

69 taṇṇ-aḷi-chcheṅkōṟ-Reṉṉa-Vāṉavaṉ Śembiyaṉ Śōḻan maṉṉar-maṉṉa(ṉ) madu-

70 ra-Karunāḍagaṉ koṉ-ṉaviṉṟa neḍuñ-chuḍar-vēr-Koṅgar-kōmāṉ kō-chChaḍaiyaṉ (||*)

71 Maṟṟ-avaṟku putraṉāy Maṉ-magaḷadu poruṭṭāga matta-yāṉai śelav=undi māna-

72 vēl valaṉ-ēndi=kkaḍu-viśaivyāl=edirndavarai Neduvayalvāy nigar=aḻi-

73 ttu=kkaṟuv-aḍainda maṉattavarai=kKuṟumaḍaivāy=kkūrpp=aḻittu Ma

74 ṉṉikurichchi(y)un=Tirumangai(y)u=muṉṉiṉṟavar muraṇ alittu mēvalō-

75 r-kaḍaṟ-ṟānai(y) ōḍ=ēṟṟ=edirēy vandavarai=pPūvalūr=ppuṟaṅ-gaṇḍuṅ=

76 koḍuṁ-puriśai nneḍuṅ-kiḍaṅgiṟ=Koḍumbāḷūr=kkūḍār-kaḍum-[pari-

Sixth Plate—first side

77 (y)un = karuṅ-kaḷiṟuṅ = kaḍir-vēliṟ = kaikkoṇḍuñ = Chēva...... (kū)ḍāda Pallavaṉai=k

78 Kuḷumbūruṭ=tēś-aḷiya eṉṉ-iṟanda māl-kaḷiṟum=ivu(liga)ḷum pala kavarn-

79 dum tariyalarāy=ttarittavarai=pPeriyalūr-ppīd-aḷiṭṭum pūviri(y)u-

80 m-poḷiṟ-chōlai·kKāviriyai=kkaḍaudiṭṭ=aḷag-amainda vār-śilai(y)in Maḷa Ko-

81 ṅgam=aḍippaḍuttu mīṇḍ=oḷiya-maṇi-imaikkum=eḷil-amainda neḍum-pu-

82 riśai=pPāṇḍikkoḍumuḍi śeṉṟ=eydi=pPaśupatiyadu panma-pādam paṇind=ē-

83 tti=kkanaka-rāśi(y)uṅ=kadir-maṇi(y)um mana-maguḷa=kkuḍuttiṭṭun-koṅga-

84 r-van-naṟun-kaṇṇi-kGaṅga-rājaṉōdu sambandañ=cheydum eṉṉirandaṉa Gō-

85 sahasramum Hiraṇyagarbhamun=Tulābhāramum maṉṉiṉmiśai=ppala śeydu ma-

86 ṟai-nāviṉōr kuṟai-tīrttuṅ-Kūḍal Vañji Kōḻi eṉṉu=māḍa-mā-madi-

Sixth Plate—second side

87 l pudukki(y)um=aṟai-kaḍal-vaḷagaṅ-kuṟaiyād=āṇḍa maṉṉar-maṉṉa(ṉ)=Reṉṉavar-muruga-

88 ṉmāṉa-veṇ-kuḍaimāṉ=Rēr=Māṟaṉ (||*) Maṟṟ=avaṟku magaṉ-āgi Māl-uruviṉ veḷiṟpa-

89 ṭṭu=kkoṟṟa-mūṉṟ=uḍaṉ=iyamba=kkuḷir-veṇ-kuḍai maṇ kāppa Pū-mangaḷum Pu-

90 la-mangaḷum Nā-mangaḷun=nalaṉ=etta=kKali-araiśaṉ vali taḷara=ppoliviṉōḍu vī-

91 ṟṟirundu kuruṅ-kaḍal-uḍutta peruṅgaṇ-ñālattu nāṟ-perum-[padai(y)um pā

92 ṟpada=pparappi=kkarudādu vand=edir-malainda Kāḍavaṉai=kkāḍ-aḍaiya=ppū-vi-

93 ri(y)um-puṉaṟ-kaḷaṉi-kKāviri(y)iṉ-ṟeṉkaraimēṟ=ṟaṉṉ-āgam-malar-chchōlai-

94 pPeṉṉāgaḍatt=amar veṉṟun=tī-vāy-a(y)il=ēndi=ttiḷaitt=edirəy van-

95 d=iṟutta Āyavəḷai(y)uṅ-Kuṟumbarai(y)um=aḍal-amaruḷ=aḷitt=ōṭṭi=kkāṭṭu-

96 (k)kuṟumbu śeṉṟ-aḍaiya Nāṭṭukkuṟumbiṟ=cheru v(e)ṉṟum=aṟai-kaḍal-vaḷā-

Seventh Plate—first side

97 gam=oru-moḻi=kkoḷiya śilai-mali-taḍa-kkai-Teṉṉa-Vāṉavaṉ avaṉē-

98 y Śrīvaran Śri-manōharan Śiṉachchōḻaṉ Puṉappūḻiyaṉ vītakanmashan

99 vinayaviśrutan vikramaparākan vīrapurōkan marudbalan mānyaśāsanan Manūpaman

100 mardditavīran giristhiran gītikinnaran kṛipālayan kṛitāpatānan Kalippagai kaṇḍa

101 kanishṭuran kāryadatshiṇan kārmukha-Pārtthan Parāntakan Paṇḍitavatsalan paripūrṇṇan pā-

102 pabhīru kurai-uṟu-kaḍaṟ-paḍai-ttāṉai-guṇagṛihyan gūdhanirṇṇayan nirai-uṟu-mala

103 r-maṇi-nīṇ-muḍi-Nəriya(r)kōṉ=Neḍuñjaḍaiya(n) (||*) Maṟṟ=avaṉṟan rājyavatsalan mūṉṟā-

Seventh Plate—second side

104 vadu śelāniṟpa āṅg=oru-māṅ-māḍa-ma-madiṟ-Kūḍaṟ-pāḍu niṉṟavar ā-

105 krōdhikka=kkoṟṟavaṉēy maṟṟ=avarai=tteṟṟeṉa naṉgu kūvi eṉṉēy nuṅ=kuṟai

106 eṉṟu muṉṉāga=ppaṇitt-arula mə-ṉā=ṉiṉ-kuravarār=pāṉ-muṟai(y)iṉ va-

107 ḻuvāmai māgan-tōy=malar-chchōlai=pPāgaṉūr-kkūṟṟattu=ppaḍuvaḍu

108 āḻva-tāṉai-aḍal-vēndēy Vēḷvikuḍi eṉṉum piyar-uḍaiyadu o-

109 Igāda vēṟ-ṟānai(y)oḍ-ōda-vēli uḍaṉ kātta Palyāga-Mudukuḍumi-

110 pPeruvaḷudi eṉṉum Paramēśvāraṉār Vēḷvikuḍi eṉṉappaṭṭadu

111 kēḷviyiṟ=ṟarappaṭṭadanai=ttuḷakkam-illā kaḍaṟ-ṟāṉaiy=āya Kaḷabhra-

112 rāl=iṟakkappaṭṭadu eṉṟu niṉṟavaṉ vijñāpyañ=cheyya naṉṟu naṉṟ=eṉṟu

113 muṟuvalittu nāṭṭā=nin-paḻamaiyādal kāṭṭi nī (koḷgav=eṉ)ṉa nāṭṭ(ā)ṟ=ṟaṉ

Eighth Plate—first side

114 paḻamaiyāḍal kāṭṭiṉāṉ=aṅg-appoḻudēy kāṭṭa mē-ṉāḷ=e(ṅ)-kura-

115 varār-pāṉmuṟai(y)ir-ṟarappaṭṭadai emmālun=tarap-paṭṭad=eṉṟu śe-

116 mmānd=avaṉ=eḍutt-aruḷi viṟ-kai-ttaḍa-kkai-viṟal-vēndaṉ Koṟkai-kiḻa-

117 n Kāmakkāṇi Naṟchiṅgaṟku=ttēr-ōḍuṅ=kaḍaṟ-ṟāṉaiyāṉ=ṉīrōḍ=aṭṭik(ko)-

118 ḍuttamai(y)iṉ maṟṟ-idaṟku-pperu-nāṉg-ellai teṟṟena viritt=uraip-

119 piṟ-pugar-aṟu-poḻin-maruṅg-uḍutta Nagarūr-ellaikkum mēkkum m·ṟṟ=idaṟkku=

120 tt(e)ṉ ellai Kuḷandaivaṅ-kūḻvandai-śe(y) kkuṅ-Kaḷandai-kkuḷattil=ālukk(u)

121 vaḍakkum maṟṟ-idaṟku mēl-ellai aṟṟam-illā=kKoṟṟaṉputtū(r)r-Oḍumaiy-i-

122 ruppai-chchey-iḍai maṟṟalai=pperuppiṟku--gkiḻakkum maṟṟ=idaṟku vaḍapā-

Eighth Plate—second side

123 l-el(lai kāya)luṭ-kamalam malarum Pāyaluḷ vaḍapālai=pperuppiṟku=t-

124 teṟkum ivv=iyait(ta) peru-nāṉg-ellaiyir-paṭṭa pūmi kārāṉmai miyāṭchi

125 uḷḷ-aḍaṅga məl=eṅ-guravarār-kuḍukkappaṭṭa pariśey emmāluṅ-(ko)ḍuk-

126 kappaṭṭadu (||*) Maṟṟ=idaṟk=āṉatti kuṟṟam-iṉṟi=kkūṟuṅkālai=ffkoṅgar-van-na

127 ruṅ-kaṉṉi-kGaṅgarājanadu kanyā-ratnaṁ Koṅgarkōṟku=kkuṇandu koḍuppa ārp-

128 p-aṟā-aḍar-ṟāṉai-pPūrvvarājar pugaṉṟ=eḻundu vil-viravuṅ=kaḍaṟ-ṟāṉai (Va)llabhaṇai

129 Veṇbaivāy āḷ-amaruḷḷ-aḻind-ōḍa vāḷ=amaruḷ=uḍaṉ=vavviya ēṉa-ppoṟi

130 igal-amaruḷ=idi-urum-eṉa valaṉ-ēnda (malai)tta-tānai-Madavīkalaṉ maṉṉar-kō-

131 ṉ-aruḷir-peṟṟun=kol-vaḷaikkum-vēṟ-ṟānai--ppal-vaḷai-kkōn kuṇara-

Ninth Plate—first side

132 ppaṭṭu=ppōr-vandavar-madan=tavirkkuṅ-Karavanda-purattavar-ku(la-t)tōṉṟal māv=ēn-

133 duṅ=kaḍar-ṟānai-Mūvēndamaṅgalappērarai(ya)n=āgiya Vaidyaka-śikhāmaṇi Māraṅgā-

134 ri (||*) I-ppiramadēyam-uḍaiya Koṟkai-kiḻāṉ Kāmakkāṇi Śuvarañ-Jiṅgaṉ i-

135 daṉuḷ mūnṟil-oṉṟun=tanakku vaitt=iraṇḍu-kūṟum aimpadiṉvar Brāhma-

136 ṇarkku nīrōḍ=aṭṭi=kkoḍuttāṉ (|*) Idaṉuḷ Mūrtti Eyiṉaṉ śavai(y)ōḍ-o

137 ṭṭadu nāṉg-arai-ppaḍāram-uḍaiyaṉa (|*) Idaṉuṭ=ṭaṉakku vaitta oru-kūṟṟilu-

138 n-tambimārkku naṉgun=tañ=chiṟṟappaṉār-makkaḷukku āṟum sa-

139 bhai(y)ōḍ=otta paḍāgāraṅ=koḍuttāṉ (*) I-ppraśasti pāḍiṉa Səṉāpa-

140 ti Ēṉādi ā(y)iṉa Śāttañ-Chāttaṟku mūṉṟu kūṟṟārum-āy=ṭ-

141 taṅgaḷōḍ-otta nāṉgu paḍāgāraṉ=koḍuttār

Ninth Plate—second side

142 Āsit=Maṅgalarājō Madhurataraḥ śāstravit=kavir=vvāgmi (|*) ājñaptir=asya Vaidyaḥ Karavandapur-ā-

143 dhivāstavyaḥ (18*) Ratshān=naraḥ parakṛitau [vidadhita vidvān=pādā hi Dharmma yaśasaḥ para-

144 masya labdha(ḥ) (|*) Dhātr=aiva srashṭam=akhilam bhuvanan=tath=api ratshantri puṇyaratayaḥ prathivīn=narēndrā(ḥ) (19*)

145 Na hi bhūmi-pradānād=vai dānam-anyad-viśishyatē (|*) na ch=āpi bhūmi-haraṇāt pāpa-

146 m-anyad=vidhīyatē (20*) Dātā daś=ānugrahṇāti yō harēd-daśa hanti cha (|*) atīt-ānāgatā-

147 nī-ha kulāni kula-mandana (21*) Sva-dattām para-dattām vā yō harēta vasundharā-

148 m (|*) na tasya (na)rakāt-ghōrād-vidyatē nishkṛitiḥ kvachit (22*) Bahubhir-vvasudhā

Tenth Plate

149 dattā bhujyatē h(i) tarādhipaiḥ (|*) yasya yasya yadā bhūm(i)s=tasya ta-

150 dā phalam (23*) chatvāraḥ imē Vaishṇavē Dharmē ślōkaḥ

151 Maṟṟ=i(da)ṉai=kkāttār malar-aḍi eṉ muḍi məla eṉṟu koṟṟavaṉey paṇi-

152 tt-aruḷi=tteṟṟena=ṭṭāmra-śāsanañ-cheyviṭṭān Iyd=eḻudi-

153 ṉa Śuttakēśari-pPerumpaṇaikkāraṉukku perumakkaḷ aruḷār=peṟṟa-

154 du oru illa-vaḷāvum iraṇḍu mā-chchey(y)um oru puṉchey(y)u-

155 m peṟṟān ivai Yuddhakēsari-pPerumbaṇaikā(ra)ṉ-eḻuttu

TRANSLATION

(Verse 1) Hail! May Śiva, whose head ornament is the cool-rayed (moon), who is the (primeval) cause for the cessation of the sufferings of the devoted, who is beautiful with matted hair of golden hue, and who crushes the mischievous pride of kandarpa (Cupid), grant you perpetual happiness.

(V. 2) May the line of Pāṇḍya kings, the cause of rest to (the serpent) Śēsha who is fatigued by bearing the burden of the Earth (on his heads), prosper on this earth to the end of the *kalpa.*

(V. 3) Victorious is the race of Pāṇḍya kings, the mine of prosperity, whose family priest is the sage (Agastya) born of the pitcher, who stopped the rapidly growing mountain from *(further)* growth, and drank all the waters of the ocean.

(V. 4) There was *(ruling)* at the entrance into the sea a king famed for his matchless prowess, named Pāṅḍya, who, even after the three worlds had disappeared at the end of the *kalpa,* was requested again to rule the worlds by the Creator who created *(these)* anew, and was born as the splendid son of the moon and named Budha.

(Vv. 5 and 6) His son was Purūravas, who crushed the kings of giants by the strength of *(his)* arm; in his family which had engraved the pair of fish *(its crest)* on the topmost rock of the lord of mountains (i.e., Mēru); whose *(kings)* shared with Śakra (i.e., Indra) half of his throne and his necklace; which was the asylum of the universe; which was the husband of the earth; which was everlasting; which in battles defeated completely the powerful enemies of gods; whose messengers were the gods; who stirred and churned the milk ocean by the mountain (Mandara); the crowning ceremony *(of whose kings)* was performed by the hand of the pitcher-born (sage Agastya); and which had filled the circle of the earth with supplicants whose hearts were gladdened by the granting of their desires, was born the glorious king Māravarman, whose virtues were praised by the three worlds.

(V. 7) Bearing on his big serpent-like shoulder the whole circle of this earth, he removed the fatigue of the lord of serpents (i.e., Śēsha), *which had been caused*) by the carrying of the earth for a long time.

(V. 8) He, the patron of the learned, conquered enemy crowds in battles and ascended the scales; came out of the nector womb (*of the cow*); and according to rule, gave away heaps of gold.

(V. 9) His son was the king called Raṇadhīra, whose prowess was equal to that of the youthful sun and who bore the burden of the earth as sportively as his ancestors wore the necklace of (Indra), the chief of the gods.

(V. 10) His son was the glorious king named Māravarman, a counterpart of Purandara (Indra); the dear lord of the beautiful lady, earth, whose pair of feet was surrounded by the collection of gems in the crowns of all kings bowing in obeisance; whose friend was truth; whose wealth was prowess; the lord of the goddess of prosperity (Padmāsanā); who was an ornament of learning and good conduct and a depository of sacred knowledge.

(V. 11) That lotus-eyed Rājasiṁha, the king of the whole earth, driving away the fear of created beings on earth, ably protected the earth unopposed (*after*) destroying the allied enemies.

(V. 12) "Is he Nara (i.e., Arjuna); is he a giant; is he Hara (i.e., Śiva); is he the Primeval Man (Vishṇu); is he Śakra (Indra) come with anger?" thus thinking of him, in the battle—field, the frightened king Pallavamalla runs away *(from him)*.

(V. 13) Who being made to born of the womb of the golden (cow) and having again ascended the matchless scales, was freed of (*his*) sins and showered freely (*his*) wealth on Brāhmanas, beggars and temples.

(V. 14) This (*king*) Māravarman suitably married the daughter of the Maḷava king of high birth; and from her was born, for the good of the world, (*the king*) named Jaṭila almost equal to Skanda the son of Śiva.

(V. 15) That king of great strength ruled the earth clearing it of (*all*) associations of corruption; the footstool of his lotus feet was worshipped by the great lustre proceeding from the gems on the crowns of prostrating kings.

(V. 16) I imagine that he lent (*his*) virtues to the Kṛita (golden age); (he lent) to the celestial tree its nature, from his hands; to the subjects who sought refuge (*in him*), his promise of protection; and to the enemy kings on the battle-field, heaven.

(V. 17) May he be long glorious on earth, king Parāntaka, the son of Rājasiṁha, whose commands are borne on the crowns by rulers of earth.

(L. 30) This *praśasti* was composed by Varōdayabhaṭṭa, who was a performer of all sacrifices (*Sarvakratuyājin*).

(L. 31) Naṟkoṟṟan, the headman of Koṟkai, who never transgressed the path of *śrutis* as interpreted by the highly learned (*men*) of the division called Pāganūrkūṟṟam,—a well-watered land of extensive paddy fields, where the beetles buzzed on cool buds in groves blooming with Nāga and the mango (*trees*),—being desirous of completing a (Vedic) sacrifice begun (*by him*), through (the favour of) the ādhiraja of the Pāṇḍyas called Palyāgamudu-kuḍumi-Peruvaḻudi, who dispersed the crowd of the enemy kings by leading numbers of ferocious elephants (*against them*), the *kēḷvi*-Brāhmanas, in presence (*of the king*) saying "Please hear (O king)" explained the petition (of Naṟkoṟṟan), stood in front of the sacrificial hall and blessed that spot to grow in prosperity under the name Vēḷvikudi.

(L. 38) The King at once gave it with libations of water so that the gift may be enjoyed indefinitely.

(L. 39) Then a brave king named Kaḷabhran took possession of the extensive earth driving away numberless great kings (*ādhiraja*) and resumed the (*village mentioned*) above.

(L. 40) Like the sun rising from the expansive ocean, the Pāṇḍyādhirāja, named Kaḍuṅgōn, the lord of the South of sharp

javelin who wore (the cloak of) dignity and was the leader of an army, sprang forth, occupied (the throne), spreading around him the brilliant splendour of (*his*) expanding rays (*prowess*), destroyed the kings of the extensive earth surrounded by the sea together with (their) strongholds and (their) fame, wielded the sceptre (of justice) and removed by his strength the evil destiny of the goddess of Earth whose splendour deserved to be under the shade of (*his*) white umbrella, by terminating by his strength the possession of her under others and establishing her in his own possession in the approved manner and destroyed the shining cities of kings who would not submit to him.

(L. 46) Then came his son Avanichūḷāmaṇi Māṟavarmaṉ, who removed the common ownership of the earth (by making it his own), who was wedded to the goddess (born) of the flower (i.e., Lakshmī), the leader of a faultless army of fighting spearmen, and the infuriated elephant who destryoed by all (*possible*) means the power (of the enemy kings).

(L. 48) Then came his son, a lovely one and incomparable, the just ruler, Śeḻiyaṉ, Vāṉavaṉ, Śēndaṉ, the lord of the hill-chifs who throw weapons (dexterously), who removed the spot from the goddess of earth, who became well known by his prowess and who possessed long hands (holding) the bow, and furious elephants.

(L. 51) Then to him (was) born, a son, Arikēsari, Asamasaman Śrī–Māṟavarman, whose high jewelled crown was adorned with ornamental hangings; who, like the brilliant Sun from the middle of the eastern mountain, came out spreading his rays, causing the quarters to tremble; won the battle at Pāḻi by driving into the field of battle caprisoned elephants; conquered the ocean–like army of Vilvēli in the battle of Nelvēli; destroyed the *Paravas* who did not seek refuge by approaching him; annihilated the race of the people of Kuṟu-nāḍu where crowds of beetls abounded on all sides; won a victory at the battle of Śennilam by driving into battle (a herd of) elephants of strong trunks; conquered many a time during the day, in the terrible battle-field of Puliyūr of strongly fortified walls, the Kēraḷa (king) whose matchless sway (extended) over the whole earth together with (his) near relations and their

elephants and captured them alive; marched against, attacked and destroyed unopposed the sea of weapons, and the high mountains (of that country); performed many times on earth (the gifts called) *hiraṇya* and *tulābhāra*, and gave (the same) with pleasure to Brāhmans and the infirm inviting them to come and assemble.

(L. 62) Then (came) his son King Śaḍaiyan, the lord of Koṅgas, whose javelins were long, brilliant and destructive, who was (also called) Teṉṉaṉ Vānavaṉ, Śembiyaṉ, Śōḻaṉ, king of kings, the beautiful Karuṇāṭakan, who, with the victorious javelin in his right (hand), fought and destroyed the glory of the ocean-like army that came forth at Marudūr and captured Āyavēḷ, attacked and destroyed him completely, gained victories in battles at Śeṅgōḍi and Pudāṉkōḍu and brought his (i.e., Āyavēḷ's) anger to an end; at the great city called Mangalapura, where the peacock danced with the cuckoo near tanks perfumed with opening flowers, attacked and destroyed the Mahārathas; removed the word "common property" (with reference to) the country (bordering) on the roaring sea; administered justice tempered with mercy and ruled the earth with love, having reached the slopes of the high and permanent mountain (Mēru) and cut on the broad face of it the bow, the tiger and the fish.

(L. 71) Then (came) his son Tēr-Māṟaṉ (i.e., Māṟan of discernment) the king of kings, a member of the Pāṇḍya (Teṉṉavar) family, the proud possessor of the white parasol, who in order to acquire the goddess of the earth, carried in his right hand the awe-inspiring javelin and driving (forth) *mast* elephants (into the battle-field), defeated straightaway at Neḍuvayal his opponents, who had rushed in great haste (*against him*); suppressed the rage of those whose minds were filled with anger (*against him*), at Kuṟumaḍai; destroyed the power of (the enemies) who confronted him at Maṇṇikuṟichchi and Tirumaṅgai; saw the backs of the insubordinate (*chiefs*) who advanced towards him with an ocean-like army, at Pūvalūr; captured the fiery steeds, the black elephants and the sharp missiles of enemies at Koḍumbāḷūr which had high ramparts and deep trenches (round it); deprived the splendour of the Pallava (king)......at Kuḻumbūr and took numberless huge

elephants and horses; humbled at Perialūr the greatness of those who had come to cut him asunder not bearing (to see his greatness); crossed the Kāviri (*with its*) groves (of trees) and tanks of budding flowers; subjugated Maḷa-koṅgam with (the help of his) beautiful long bow; proceeded and reached Pāṇṇikkoḍumuḍi of high fortifications, beautiful with the lustre emanating from brilliant gems; prostrated and worshipped the lotus feet of Paśupati *(Śiva)*; gave away with great pleasure heaps of gold and lustrous gems; contracted relationship with Gaṅgarāja, who wore garlands of sweet-scented flowers; and performing on earth countless (gifts of) *Gōsahasra*, *hiraṇyagarbha* and *tulābhāra*, relieved the distress of (the Brāhmanas) who studied the Vēdas; renewed the places and the high ramparts (of the capital towns) named Kūḍaḷ (i.e., Madura), Vañji (Karūr) and Kōḷi (Uraiyūr) and ruled the whole earth (bounded) by the roaring ocean.

(L. 8?) Then (came) his son Neḍuñjaḍaiyan, the king of the Nēriyar (i.e., the Çōḷas) who (wore) a high crown covered with flowers and gems, who kept (*his*) council secret, who was respected for his virtues (and possessed) an army of battalions (*as extensive*) as the rising noisy ocean, who was afraid of (committing) sins, who had no wants, who was lover of the learned (Panḍitavatsala), death to his enemies (Parāntaka), a Pārtha (i.e., Arjuna) in (wielding) the bow, clever in his designs, cruel to the wicked, the enemy of the Kali (*age*) (Kalippagai), the performer of noble deeds, the abode of mercy, a Kinnara in music, firm as mountain, the smasher of heroes, he who equalled Manu, whose commands were obeyed, who was strong as wind, the foremost of the valiant, master of heroism, renowned for good behaviour, free from (all) blemish, Punappūḷiyaṉ, Śiṇachchōḷan, Śrīvara, the paramour of Śrī (i.e., Lakshmī), the Tennan (i.e., Pāṇḍya), and Vāṇavaṉ (i.e., Chēra) whose long hand holds the bow and whose one word (of command) was accepted by the earth (*bounded by*) the noisy sea, who appeared in the form of Vishṇu with victory thrice-told, protecting the earth under his cool white umbrella, well praised by the goddess of the flower (i.e., Lakshmī), the goddess of the earth and the goddess of the tongue (i.e., Sarasvatī); we began

his rule so brilliantly that the strength of the lord of Kali was weakened; who, in the battle of Peṇṇāgaḍam (*surrounded by*) an expanse of water and flowery groves and (situated) on the southern bank of the Kāvēri of blooming flowers and well-watered paddy fields, defeated the Kāḍava (king), who inconsiderately came and attacked (*him*) with his four-fold big army spread on all sides of the extensive earth girt by the black ocean, and drove (*him*) into the forest; and who crushing and driving in a fierce battle the Āya-Vēḷ and the Kurumbas that came and attacked (*him*) in great numbers; advanced with fiery spears and gained a victory over them in a battle at Vāṭṭukkuṟumbu (i.e., Kuṟumbu-nadu) (*so that they*) sought shelter in the forests of (their) fortifications.

(L. 103) While the third year of the reign of this (*king*) was current, one (*particular*) day, a bystander of Kūḍal (i.e., Madura) (*the city of*) mansions and high ramparts, having cried out (*by way of complaint*), the king himself at once called him mildly and was pleased to ask him first "what is your complaint.' The bystander submitted thus "Oh! Mighty king of powerfu, army! Formerly without swerving from the pure (*path*) prescribed by law, (the village) called Vēḷvikuḍi included in Pāganūr-kūṟṟam, whose flowery groves touched the sky, was designated Vēḷvikuḍi and was granted through the (*kēḷvi*) (Brāhmanas) by your ancestorl the great lord known as Palyāgamudukuḍumi-Peruvaḻudi, who protected (the earth) girt by the ocean with an army of spearmen who never miss (*their aim*). It has (*since*) been resumed by the brave ocean-like army of the Kaḷabhras." The king gently smiled and said: "Very vell, very well, prove your antiquity (*of the gift*) by (*a reference to*) the district (*assembly*) and receive (*it back*)." He (the supplicant) proved then and there, the antiquity of his (*claim*) by (*a reference to*) the district (*assembly*). Thereupon the powerful king, of long arms holding the bow, being overjoyed was pleased to declare "what was granted formerly by my elders (*guruvars*) according to rule, is also granted by us" and so saying the discerning he, (of many chariots?) of ocean-like army, gave (*it*) with libations of water to Kāmakkāṇi Naṟchiṅgaṉ, the headman of Koṟkai.

(L. 118) The four big boundaries of this (*village*) given in full detail are:—(*The eastern boundary is*) to the west of the boundary of Nagarūr surrounded on (*all*) sides by faultless flower—gardens. The southern boundary of this (*is*) to the north of the field (*called*) Kūḷvandai-śey of Kuḷandēvaṉ and of the banyan tree in the Kaḷandai-pond. The western boundery of this (*is*) to the east of the mound (*peruppu*) on the western side of the field (*called*) Oḍumaiyiruppai-śey of the faultless Koṟṟaṉputtūr. And the northern boundary of this (*is*) to the south of the mound on the northern side of (*the village of*) Pāyal where lotuses grow in canals.

(L. 124) The land included within the four big boundaries thus described is also given away by us, inclusive of *kārāṇmai* and *miyāṭchi*, in the same manner as it had been given formerly by our elders.

(L. 126) The *āṇatti* of this (grant) correctly described is Madavikalaṉ, Mārangāri, the crest-jewel of the Vaidyaka family entitled Mūvēndamaṅgalappēraraiyan who was favoured by the king of kings, whose army fought powerfully like a thunderbolt, in battles where machines (contraptions?) shaped like wild hogs (*ēnappoṟi*) killed (the enemies) in (*close*) fight with (*drawn*) swords when the kings of the east (Pūrvarājar) possessing clamorous battalions of fighting men rose up, and put to fight with (*great*) loss in an infantry attack at Veṇbai, the Vallabha of the vast army of archers, on the occasion when the excellent daughter of Gaṅgarāja who wore a garland of highly scented flowers (*dribbling*) honey was secured and offered to Koṅgarkōṉ (i.e., the Pāṇḍya king), who was a prince of the race of Karavandapurattavar, who possessed a powerful big army that crushed the pride of those who came to fight being (*thither*) brought together by (i.e., under the leadership of) kings wearing many bracelets and possessing an army of spearmen who wielded deadly weapons.

(L. 134) Kāmakkāṇi Śuvaran, the headman of Koṟkai, who owns this (*brahmadēya*) reserving for himself one-third of this (*village*), gave the (*remaining*) to parts to fifty Brāhmanas with libations of water, In this are included the four and a half

paḍāgāras (*of land*) of Mūrti Eyinan approved by the (*village*) assembly. And in the part reserved for himself in this (*village*) he gave with the approval of the (*village*) assembly four *paḍāgāras* to his younger brothers and six *paḍāgāras* to his younger paternal uncle's children. And the owners of the three parts with their united approval gave four *paḍāgārs* (of land) to the general (Sēnāpati) Ēnādi *alias* Śāttaṇ Śāttan, who composed this eulogy (*praśasti*).

(V. 18) The *ājñapti* of this (document) was Maṇgalaraja, the very sweet (*madhuratara*) poet (*kavi*) and orator, well versed in the sciences, a Vaidya and a resident of Karavandapura.

(V. 19) Oh! Dharma! A (*learned*) man must render protection to the deeds of others. Indeed (*these are*) the feet acquired by (i.e., on which stands) great fame. The world was all created by Dhātṛi (Brahman). Still kings desirous of merit protect the earth.

(V. 20) No gift is greater than the gift of land; nor is there a greater sin enjoined (*on man*) than (*that of*) resuming land (*already given*).

(V. 21) Oh! Gladdener of your race! He that makes a gift on this earth blesses (*his*) the generations past and future; and he that takes away (*that which has been given*) destroys ten generations past and future.

(V. 22) To him that robs land given by himself or by others, there is no expiation anywhere except in the dreadful hell.

(V. 23) Lands have been given away by many. Different kings are ruling (*them*). The fruit (*of protection*) belongs to him whose land it happens to be (*at the time*). These four are verses in the Vaishṇava-Dharma.

(L. 151) "The flower-like feet of those who protect this (*charity*) shall be on my crown". The king himself was thus pleased to say and caused a copper-plate grant to be executed at once.

(L. 152) Śuttakēśari-perumbāṇaikkāraṇ who engraved this (*document*), and to whom were allotted through the favour of the great men (*of this village*) one house site, two *ma* of (*wet*) field and one dry field received (*the above*). This is the signature of Yuddhakēsari-Perumbaṇaikkāraṇ.

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE FOUR ĀS'RAMAS

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Professor P. V. Bapat[1] has raised a doubt regarding the antiquity of the Institution of the Four Āśramas. He has suggested their development mainly as a deliberate attempt of social reformers to counteract the Buddhist teaching of leaving the house and accepting the houseless state. The main reasons for his contention are: (1) the non-reference to this Institution in the *Pāli Tripiṭaka* and Jain canons and (2) the earliest reference to the Institution as current now, found only in the Post-Buddhist *Upaniṣad* called *Jābālopaniṣad*.[2] He does not take seriously the claims made on the basis of the reference to the three *dharmaskandhas* in the *Chāndogyopaniṣad*[3] and disregards the views of P. V. Kane and others about the antiquity of the four stages of life.

First we have to remember that the *Pāli Tripiṭakas* were completed by the middle of the 3rd century B.C.[4] The Jain canonical texts were also composed almost around the same period.[5] The date of composition of the ten principal *Upaniṣads* is universally accepted as not later than the 6th century B.C.[6] In the light of the above relative chronology I would first show that there is no basis for Bapat's contention. First internal evidences from the Upaniṣadic texts are given followed by supporting evidences from other branches of the Sanskrit literature.

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1. Presidential address pp. 34–5. *All India Oriental Conference* XXVII. 1974.
2. Section 4. *Minor Upanishads*. Adyar Library, 1912, p. 64.
3. 2.23.1.
4. A. K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism* p. 214.
5. H. R. Kapadia, *A History of the Canonical literature of the Jainas*, p. 119.
6. Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*. Preface p. 6.

The problem has already been discussed by P. V. Kane,[7] Har Dutt Sarma[8] and recently by G. S. Ghurye[9] and it has been pointed out that the Hindu Stages of life preceded the rise of Buddhism. I am bringing together all the *Upaniṣadic* passages which allude to the different stages of life. It is followed by such other supportive evidences not pointed out by the above writers on the topic.

The passage[10] from the *Chandogyopaniṣad* referred to by Bapat says: "There are three branches of duty—(1) Sacrifice, study of the *Vedas* and alms-giving, (2) Austerity and (3) A student of sacred knowledge staying in or permanently settling in the house of a teacher. All these three become possessors of meritorious worlds. He who stands firm in the *Brahman*, attains immortality." Here the word *āśrama* has not been used. Nor has it been used in any of the early *Upaniṣads* or *Brāhmaṇas*. Only later we find the word '*āśrama*' in the *Jābālopaniṣad*[11] and other later *Upaniṣads*[12] and the word '*atyāśramin*' (one who is beyond the purview of *āśrama*) in the *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*.[13] Moreover, apparently it does not seem to be referring to the fourth *āśrama*. The enumeration of the stages of life is also not in the usual order.

Now it may be pointed out that the last line in this quotation, 'He who stands firm in the *Brahman* attains immortality' implies the fourth *āśrama*.[14] This contention stands justified in the light of Bādarāyaṇa's discussion in the *Vedāntasūtras* and the commentary of Śaṅkara on this passage. Jaimini objects[15] that this quotation

7. *History of Dharmaśāstra* Vol. II. pt. i. p. 422.

8. *Contribution to the History of Brahmanical Asceticism.* Poona Oriental Series 64. p. 20.

9. *Indian Sadhus.* 2nd edition, 1964, p. 26.

10. 2-23-1.

11. Mantra 4.

12. *Āśramopaniṣad* introductory line.

13. 6-21.

14. It may be pointed out here that the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* III. 21 describes the funeral of a realized *Brahman* where it is called *Brahmamedha*.

15. See *Brahmasūtra* 3-4-18. Advaitashrama Eng. transl. p. 427.

from the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* is a mere reference to *Sannyāsa* and not an injunction. Bādarāyaṇa replies[16] "*Sannyāsa* also must be gone through as the text refers to all the stages of life equally." The life of a householder is held important here and elsewhere[17] because it includes the duties of all other stages of life. The word "*dharma*" in this passage is taken[18] to mean the peculiar duties of the stages of life.

Elsewhere[19] in the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* we find references to the student and householder. They are promised freedom from transmigration as a reward for the study, the procreation of children, the practice of yoga, abstention from injury to living creatures and sacrifices. It[20] also describes the true way to the world of *Brahman* through a life of abstinent religious study. "Now what people call 'betaking to hermit life in the forest' (*araṇyāyana*) is really the chaste life of a student of sacred knowledge."

Reference is also made[21] to the death of the anchorite in the forest, and to the sacrifice in the village. "So those who know this, and those who worship in a forest with the thought that "Faith is austerity', pass into the flame.

The terms *brahmacārin* and *antevāsin* denoting a student occur in the *Chāndogyopaniṣad.*[22]

We may see now the reference in the other *Upaniṣads* to one or other of the activities of the different stages of life. The routine nature of a householder is described in the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*[23] without being named as '*Gṛhastha*'. The *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* describes[24] those engaged in doing rites yielding desired benefits as ignorant

16. *Ibid* 3.4.19. *cf.* also 3.4.49.

17. 8.15.1.

18. *History of Dharmaśāstra* Vol. I. p. 2.

19. 8.5.1-4.

20. 8.5.3.

21. *Chāndogyopaniṣad* 5.10.1, 2. Hume, *Ibid.* p. 232.

22. 4.10.1 and 4.10.3, 4.

23. mantra 2.

24. 1.2.10.

and praises[25] those who indulge in doing penance in the forests and roam about soliciting alms (*Vānaprasthas* and *Sannyāsins*). In another verse[26] it does not deny the benefits accruing from the performance of rites like *agnihotra*. The reason for the earlier criticism is to point out the ordeal one has to undergo to reap the desired fruits of the performance of these rites. The final salvation is also declared[27] to be achieved by *Yatis* of pure spirit, who have cultivated knowledge of *Vedānta* and practised *Sannyāsa*.

While describing the significance of the *praṇava* (syllable *Om*), the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*[28] also makes an indirect reference to the *āśramas* :—

> "The word which all the *Vedas* rehearse,
> And which all austerities proclaim,
> Desiring which men live the life of religious studentship—
> That word to thee I briefly declare."[29]

The *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*[30] also refers to the mendicants—"Such a one the *Brahmans* desire to know by repetition of the *Vedas*, by sacrifices, by offerings, by penance, by fasting. On knowing him, in turth, one becomes an ascetic (*muni*). Desiring him only as their homes, mendicants wander forth".[31] Earlier in another context it describes[32] the knower of *Brahman*—'He who passes beyond hunger and thirst, beyond sorrow and delusion, beyond old age and death—*Brahmans* who know such a soul overcome desire for sons, desire for wealth, desire for worlds, and live the life of mendicants. For, desire for sons is desire for wealth, and desire for wealth is desire for worlds; both these are merely desires. Therefore let a *Brahman* become disgusted

25. 1.2.11.
26. 1.2.3.
27. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* 3.2.6.
28. 1.2.15.
29. Hume, *Ibid.* pp. 348-49. *cf. Bhagavadgītā* 8.11.
30. 4.4.22.
31. Hume, *Ibid.* p. 143.
32. 3.5. See *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 14.6.4.1.

with learning and desire to live as a child. When he has become disgusted both with the state of childhood and with learning, then he becomes an ascetic (*muni*). When he has become disgusted with both the non-ascetic state and with the ascetic state, then he becomes a *Brahman*.'[33]

Later on,[34] the knower of *Ātman* has been contrasted with those who sacrifice and make benefactions, and those who practise asceticism. There is another passage[35] which upholds that the knower of *Brahman* need not do any work. "This much indeed is the means of immortality, my dear. Saying this Yājñavalkya left home." At the same time we have passages[36] in which knowers of the self are described as performing sacrifices etc.: "Janaka, emperor of Videha performed a sacrifice in which gifts were freely distributed" "I am going to perform a sacrifice, sirs." The latter is the statement of Aśvapati, a knower of the self. Thus we find that the *Upaniṣadic* passages quoted above refer both to the performance of sacrifices and to the renunciation of the home.

We have in the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*,[37] "This Soul (*Ātman*) is obtainable by truth, by austerity (*tapas*), by proper knowledge (*jñāna*), by the student's life of chastity (*brahmacarya*) practised constantly. Within the body, consisting of light, He is pure whom the ascetics (*yati*) behold with imperfections done away." "They the ascetics (*yati*), who have ascertained the meaning of the *Vedānta* knowledge, with natures purified through the application of renunciation (*sannyāsayoga*), are all liberated beyond death at the end of time in the world of *Brahman*."

In another place, the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*[38] describes the gaining of knowledge as *tapas* and not the austerities.

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33. Hume, *Ibid.* p. 112.
34. 3.8.10.
35. 4.5.15.
36. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 3.1.1 and *Chāndogyopaniṣad* 5.11.5.
37. 3.1.5 and 3.2.6.
38. 1.1.9.

There is a general opinion[39] that the Institution of the *Āśramas* has not been referred to in the Vedic literature and that the rule which prescribes that after spending part of his life as a *Brahmacārin*, and part as a householder, the Brahmin became an ascetic later divided into the two stages of *Vānaprastha*. But our discussion above would show that the different stages of life have been referred to individually in different contexts. The codes relating to these stages seem to have been developed later not because of any extraneous influence but because of its own process of thinking. This has led to the systematic treatment of this subject later in the *dharmasūtras* which formulated the rules governing these stages of life.

Regarding the division of one's life as being devoted to these different stages we have an indication in the *Chāndogyopaniṣad*[40] from the story of Upakośala Kamalāyana. He had spent with his master 12 years tending the fire and yet the master had left on pilgrimage without instructing him. Later the pupil learnt all the *vidyās* from the different fires and was blessed by the master.

The above conclusion can be substantiated by early references in some other branches of the Sanskrit literature. Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* sheds some light on the social conditions and the pattern of education of that time. The date of Pāṇini has been fixed[41] as middle of 5th century B.C. Pāṇini knows[42] of the Institution of *āśrama* comprising the student life, householder, *Parivrājaka* and *Bhikṣu*. Of course the *Parivrājaka* here seems to

39. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index* Vol. I. pp. 68-9. II. p. 90. Deussen, *Philosophy of the Upanishads* 372 et seq.

40. 4.10.1.

41. V. S. Agrawala, *India as known to Pāṇini* p. 475.

42. वर्णाद् ब्रह्मचारिणि (V. 2. 134), गृहपतिना संयुक्ते ञ्य: (IV. 4.90), मस्कर-मस्करिणौ वेणुपरिव्राजकयो: (VI. 1.154) and सनाशंसभिक्ष उ: (III. 2.168). See V. S. Agrawala, *Ibid.* p. 81. The Uṇādisūtra II. 59 परौ व्रजे ष: पदान्ते also explains the formation of the word परिव्रा ; also under अजिव्रज्योश्च VII. 3.60.

be mainly referring to the heretical mendicants who were probably the followers of Makkhali Gosāla. Kātyāyana calls the system of four *āśramas* as *Cāturāśramya* (V. I. 124) (Pāṇini sūtra Guṇavacana etc.). (Bhaṭṭoji also reads *Cāturāśramya* under yathā–tathā yathāpurayoḥ paryāyeṇa VII. 3.31). Further details about the student life and the householder are also available.[43] A student who breaks his studentship and enters upon the householder's life is condemned[44] by Pāṇini. He mentions[45] both Brahmanical ascetics and heretical sects. Reference[46] to some Buddhist terms such as *Maskarī*, *Kumāriśramaṇa*, *Nikāya* and *Nirvāṇa* are also found. As to the former he mentions[47] those following the *Bhikṣu-sūtras* promulgated by Pārāśarya and Karmanda; of the latter reference is made[48] to *Maskarī* mendicants, who were probably the followers of Makkhali Gosāla. Several epithets indicative of the stages of spiritual culture are given.[49] The term *naikaṭika*[50] is taken by the commentators to refer to a monk who had become a *Vānaprastha*, and in obedience to the rules of his order took his abode near the village outside it. Similarly *kaukkuṭika*[51] is taken by the *Kāśikā* as a mendicant who walks with his gaze fixed to the ground to avoid harming life.

From the *Udāna* and other Buddhist literature we find that there were various sectaries of *Śramaṇas* and *Brāhmaṇas* all *Parivrājakas* followers of different systems.[52]

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43. See V. S. Agrawala, *Ibid.* p. 82-4.
44. खट्वाक्षेपे II. 1.26 (Khaṭvārūḍhaḥ jālmaḥ).
45. V. S. Agrawala, *Ibid.* pp. 380-5.
46. *Ibid.* p. 475.
47. पाराशर्यशिलालिभ्यां भिक्षुनटसूत्रयोः IV. 3.110.
    कर्मन्दकृशाश्वादिनिः IV. 3.111.
48. मस्करमस्करिणौ वेणुपरिव्राजकयोः VI. 1.154.
49. *tāpasa, tapasvin, śami, dami, yogi, viveki* and *tyāgī*.
50. निकटे वसति IV. 4.73.
51. संज्ञायां ललाटकुक्कुट्यौ पश्यति IV. 4.46.
52. See V. S. Agrawala, *Ibid.* p. 384.

Yāska, who is considered[53] to be quite anterior to Pāṇini, while explaining[54] a verse from the *Ṛgveda*[55] states that while the verse is interpreted by the *Pārivrājakas* in one way, the *Nairuktikas* interpret it differently. It seems a class of mendicants known as *Parivrājakas* must have been in existence at Yāska's time. Moreover he uses[56] the word *Parivrājaka* as an example for the usage that when the same person does many things he gets a name relating to one of his acts.

From Pāṇini we also understand that the *Caraṇas* were the custodians of the cultural traditions created by generations of their students and teachers. Pāṇini is acquainted[57] with the various types of literature as the output of the Caraṇas, viz. (1) the *Vedic Śākhā* texts, (2) *Brāhamaṇa* works, (3) *Kalpa* works, (4) the *Dharmasūtras*. We do not know which *Dharmasūtra* was in existence then. The different *Dharmasūtras* belonged to a period between 500—300 B.C.[58]

This will be helpful for us to answer Bapat's remarks on the reference in the *Baudhāyanadharmasūtra*[59]. It is not Baudhāyana's own view. This passage occurs here as a quotation from *pūrvapakṣa* which asserts that the Institution of the *Āśramas* is the creation of a demon Kapila, son of Prahlāda, to the detriment of his enemies, the gods, who would thereby be deprived of offerings from those who would reach the third and fourth stages of *Āśramas*. Then Baudhāyana establishes the importance of the life of a householder. Prior to this quotation Baudhāyana himself describes[60] the four stages of life. Moreover, at the outset of his

53. See A. B. Keith, *Ṛgveda Brāhmaṇas* p. 43.
54. *Nirukta* II. 8.
55. I. 164.32.
56. I. 14 (*Ānand.* Edn. p. 77).
57. चरणेभ्यो धर्मवत् IV. 2.46. and चरणाद्धर्माम्नाययोः Vārrtika under गो चरणाद्वुञ् IV. 3.126. See Agrawala, *Ibid.* p: 301.
58. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* Vol. V. Pt. ii. p. xii.
59. II. 6.30.
60. II. 6.14 Brachmacāri Gṛhastho Vānaprasthaḥ Parivrājaka iti/

work, he furnishes[61] the types of men fit to be chosen for giving a counsel. Here he recognises the four stages of life and says that those three other than the forest ascetic (*Vānaprastha*) are fit for giving the counsel. As a matter of fact all the *Dharmasūtras* recognize the four stages of life. As their purpose is to uphold the injunction in the *Vedas*, they speak high of the life of an householder. Only the *Āpastambadharmasūtra*[62] describes vedic study at the house of the teacher after *upanayana* as a prerequisite for all the four stages of life which it calls *Gārhastyam*, *ācāryakulam*, *maunam* and *vānaprasthyam* where the word *mauna* means the stage of *muni* bent on acquisition of knowledge.

Moreover according to him Yogic disciplines are to be adhered to by all the followers of the four *āśramas*.[63] Sticking to anyone of the *āśramas* yields the desired fruit.

Āpastamba refers[64] to the view that the *āśrama* of *ūrdhvaretasa* is superior to that of the householder. Here his reference is probably to the passage in the *Jābālopaniṣad*[65] which speaks of renunciation the moment one gets detachment. He upholds[66] that the life of a householder is the most superior. It is quite justified for the *dharmasūtras* to uphold the superiority of the life of a householder. But the allusion here to the view similar to that found in the *Jābālopaniṣad* may be taken as confirming the existence of these texts prior to the *dharmasūtra*. It is also established from the organised way in which we find the treatment meted out to this subject in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, that the *Jābālopaniṣad* had an early existence.

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61. I. 1.8 Cāturvaidyam vikalpi ca aṅgaviddharmapāṭhakaḥ/
    āśramāstrayo viprāḥ parṣadeṣā daśāvarā//
62. II. 21. 1-3.
63. I. 23.14.
64. II. 23.8.
65. Mantra 4.
66. II. 23.9.

Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*[67] is held to have been composed at the end of the 4th century B.C. The organised existence of the Institution of the *āśramas* is borne out from the descriptions in the *Arthaśāstra.* The text describes[68] the institution of the castes followed by a description of the different stages of life and their duties enjoined on these. At the outset in this section, the *Arthaśāstra*[69] states that both the *varṇas* and *āśramas* are governed by the *Trayīdharma* namely the (first) there Vedas, the *Atharvaveda* and *Itihāsa* and thirdly the six subordinate texts (*Śikṣā*, *Vyākaraṇa* etc.). The names of the four stages of life are *gṛhastha, brahmacārin, vānaprastha, parivrājaka.* The duties pertaining to that of a householder are explained[70] first. The details pertaining to the *parivrājakas* are then given.[71] A useful category of secret agents called *udāsthita* were recruited from the *parivrājaka* order. There are references[72] to both the *parivrājaka* of the Brahmanical order and also to heretics referred to as *vṛṣala* or *pāṣaṇḍa, Śākyas* and *Ājivakas.* The *Śākyas* were the followers of Buddha and *Ājivakas* were a sect founded by Gosāla Makkhaliputta. The Jainas are not referred to here. The monkhood other than the *vānaprastha* should not be allowed in the countryside which does not seem to apply to the *parivrājakas* of the Brahmanical order.[73]

In another context it lays down[74] that monks of the Vedic order (*āśramiṇaḥ*) and those of the heretical orders (*pāṣaṇḍāḥ*) should stay together if ample space is available tolerating inconveniences.

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67. For this traditional view see R. P. Kangle, *The Kauṭilya Arthaśāsara* Pt. III (A Study) p. 59.

68. I. 3. 4-12.

69. I. 3.4 (eṣa trayīdharmaścaturṇām varṇānāmāśramāṇām).

70. See R. P. Kangle, *Ibid.* pp. 151-3.

71. *Ibid.* p. 154. See text II. 1.29-30.

72. See *Ibid.* pp. 154-6 and 98-9.

73. R. P. Kangle, *Ibid.* p. 154.

74. *Ibid.* p. 155 (text III. 16. 33-34).

But it is quite evident[75] that Buddhism was not yet a widespread religion at the time when *Arthaśāstra* was composed.

The reference[76] to the life of an anchorite is found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* where the word '*śramaṇa*' is used to denote it. The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*[77] also uses the words '*Tāpasa*' and '*Śramaṇa*' which are taken to mean the *Vānaprasthas* and the *Parivrājakas* respectively. This is later confirmed by the *Gautamadharmasūtra* when it describes the *vaikhānasa* (*anchorite*) where it prescribes a *śrāmaṇakaśāstra.*

The *Gautamadharmasūtra* is considered to be anterior to Pāṇini on account of its archaic nature and being referred to in the *Baudhāyanadharmasūtra.*[78] The early *Brāhmaṇa* and *Upaniṣadic* literature had used the word '*śramaṇa*' to denote the *parivrājaka.* The term was not used later on in the Hindu literature after the term became associated more with the Buddhists.

The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*[79] has a passage which urges men to bring forth children to save themselves from censure. Here the words *mala, ajina, smaśrūṇi, tapas* are interpreted by Sāyaṇa to mean the *gṛhastha, brahmacārin, vānaprastha* and *parivrājaka* respectively.

From the above discussion it is clear that there is no justification to consider the Institution of the four *Āśramas* as posterior to Buddhism.

75. See discussion P. V. Kane, *HDS,* I. p. 102.

76. IV. 3.22.

77. II 7. See Sāyaṇa's commentary. *cf.* also I. 23.

78. *History of Dharmaśāstra* I. p. 17-18.

79. Kim nu malam kimajinam kim śmaśrūṇi kim tapaḥ/
putram brahmāṇa icchadhvam sa vai loko'vadāvadaḥ//
4th gāthā in XXXIII. 1. Ānandāśrama edn. pp. 836-7.

REPORTS OF SEMINARS

I

The Institute of Traditional Cultures held a Seminar at 4 P.M. on 6th November, 1974 in Room No. 48 of the University Departmental Buildings on "BALLADS IN TAMIL NADU" led by Thiru M. Arunachalam, M.A. The following is a Report of the Proceedings of the seminar.

Present:

Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D. Litt., D. Phil. (Oxon), in the Chair.

Thiru M. Arunachalam, M.A., Leader.

An audience of 52 presons was present.

The Chairman moved a resolution condoling the death of Dr. M. Varadarajan, Vice-Chancellor of the Madurai University which was unanimously adopted, all present standing as a mark of respect.

The Chairman introduced Thiru Arunachalam and requested him to lead the seminar.

Thiru M. Arunachalam: The Concept of Ballad: Ballad is the English name given to a class of narrative poems which are handed down by word of mouth through successive generations over a long period. We are quite familiar with the type of such oral tradition in ancient scriptural literature and later formal literature. The Vedas in Sanskrit were known as *śrutis*, those which were heard, because they were all perpetuated only through oral tradition for several millenia. So also in the Tamil language, *Iṛaiyanār kaḷaviyal urai,* we are told, had been handed down through oral tradition for generations, and then only put down in writing. The ballads have been perpetuated in a similar manner; but they possess certain characteristic features of style and treatment which separate them in a class apart from formal literature.

The English ballad is said to be short, but in the Tamil language the ballads have always been long poems. They always

narrate a story in a simple style. The structure is invariably dramatic. Its language is fairly uniform. The narration is generally compressed, not loose, objective and impersonal in presentation. The ballads have existed as orally transmitted songs; they have been preserved to us only by fortuitous noting down in palm leaves perhaps from about 1600 A.D. and handed down to us in print from about 1800 A.D., comparatively in quite modern times. Although occasional efforts are made at collection, much of ballad literature has been lost for want of systematic recording and preservation.

Since this literature has come down to us through oral tradition, most of it, at least the early part of it, is known only as anonymous compositions. These constitute the classical ballads. Many have attempted to write ballads now, but they are all laboured writings; they never had the popularity the ancient ballads still have.

Theme of the Ballad:

The theme may be anything—love themes ending in tragedy, love themes with a happy ending, family entanglements, pure romance, religious themes, adventures and pure heroism; even scoundrelism is not wanting.

Magic and witch-craft are said to be common themes in English balladry. They are absent in Tamil ballads. Probably Āravalli-Sūravalli ballad is an exception. Here these two princesses live in an enchanted fortress in Nellore. No one is able to penetrate the net of magic which they have spread over their fort, or having once entered it, escape, becoming victims of their witch-craft. Allirajan a prince from the south successfully enters the fort of the sisters, overcomes their magic and witch-craft and emerges victorious after marrying Āravalli's daughter and bringing her away to his own city in the south. Adentures at sea are almost absent, except the solitary one where Rāmappayyan constructs a bridge to cross over to Rāmēśwaram as narrated in the historical ballad Rāmappayyan ammānai, a'though we may remember that the Tamils were a great sea-faring race, a thousand years ago.

The purpose of the Ballad:

The ballads are principally for entertainment and relaxation. They are important to the masses for their narrative and descriptive values. They are mostly on familiar themes, well known legends, local tales and historical stories, narrated in all grandeur for the enjoyment of the masses.

The ballad literature came to satisfy a need among the masses for literature which they could directly enjoy and which could entertain them in the early hours of the night, when they could relax after the day's hard labour and which they could call their own.

They mark a definite deviation from the orthodox or formal types of literature of the scholar poets or *Sen-Tamiḻ* literature and usher in a new era of popular poetic literature which have had their hey-day during the last three centuries.

It is not worthwhile trying to read into the ballads meanings and allusions which really are not there. Critics have something in mind; they try to project this into the composition of the ballads and say that the ballad came to be written for that purpose. Every ballad does not deal with class struggles or caste wars. We would go even further and say that these ideas are most modern and never entered the minds of the composers, or the singers and the listeners.

It is not as though the ballads were used only for the entertainment of the masses or at the time of festivals in the temples of the petty deities. Extracts from some of the ballads were in use at the time of the *Mahanōnbu*. The *Navarātri* is the season dedicated to the Goddess of Learning. In olden days, the village school master was not paid in cash. Presents of grains and clothes, also of cows were made to him on this occasion. He used to organise groups of *kōlaṭṭam* plays with 8, 12 or 16 children and take them out in the evenings to the houses of the more affluent parents. The ballad was one of the songs used in the *kōlaṭṭam*; other songs included those from *Tayumānavar*, and poems in *Tevāram*, *Tiruvāçakam* and *Tiruppugaḻ*. Hence we find here that

the ballads were not only sung, but that also a dignified place was given to them in society.

The name of the Ballad:

We have no word here corresponding to the English word ballad; we employ the term '*ammānai-ppāḍal*' to denote the ballad. Although the two are not the same, the Tamiḻ term is quite appropriate. The *ammānaippāḍal* has generally a story theme; it is told in the form of a long poem; it is composed in a language simple, familiar and appealing to the masses. Here the illiterate listener feels that all the lines are his own; not only the words, but the ideas, emotions, situations and characters are all his own, which he can enjoy and enter into. Hence the name ballad is quite appropriate to the type of poems we shall here discuss. Equally fitting is the Tamiḻ term *ammānaippaḍal* because all thsee poems, however long they be, frequently use the word *ammānai* as a sort of refrain; in the poem, the word has no import, but yet the writer uses it. Be it a historical ballad, or a *puranic* ballad, or a mere romantic story, we find this term.

We learn that in the English language also, there was no definite term to denote the ballad concept; it was variously known in the early years as song, tale, ditty etc; the last term, and the one which had come to stay was the word ballad.

The use of this term *ammānaipāḍal* for Tamiḻ ballads here, in a long story-poem, is reminiscent of the folk-song poem, *Mūvar ammānai*, a collection of more than 10 verses, written and compiled in the 17th century. The term *ammānai* signifies a game of balls or cowries played by girls. Here three girls play. The first makes a statement; the second asks a question based on it, repeating her own words; the third gives an answer with a twist and pun on the words of the last, which is an answer to both the statement and the question. The answer is a pun, giving two interpretations which answer the other two girls. The word *ammānai* is uttered by each of the three girls and hence the name of the poem *Mūvar* (three persons) *ammānai*.

The game consists of throwing small balls into air vertically one after the other with the right hand, catching it with the left passing it on to the right and thus continuing the play without any break.

The poem has been current even among the illiterates for several centuries. By their elements of repetition, rhyme, alliteration and assonance, along with pun and play, the songs have endeared themselves, not only to girls but to the intelligent people alike, at all social levels, upto the early part of the present century.

The origin for the *Mūvar ammānai* type is found in *Śilappadikāram.* This ancient classic employs the form or motif of many folk-songs, of which one is the *ammānai.* In the *Vaḻttukkāthai,* girls play and dance to the tune of many songs, of which *ammānai vari* is one. Some ten centuries after *Śilappadikāram,* treatises on poetics specify the *ammānai* as an indispensible feature of a *kalambakam* poem.

The term *ammānai* attained a status and a dignity when saint Manikkavaçakar song an *ammānai* poem—the *Tiru ammānai* as the eighth song of his *Tiruvaçakam.* It contains 20 verses of six lines each, all ending with the word *ammānai.* All the verses sing only the praise of Śiva. The *ammānai* game is invariably found mentioned in the *Ulā prabandaṁ,* in the course of the description of one or the other of the girls in the conventional seven-age groups; there is always a pun on the word *ammānai* here. *Ammānaip-paruvam* is a stage in the *Piḷḷai-Tamiḻ* poem sung on a form of Śakti, where one of the ten sections of the poem is set apart for this theme. Śakti is here invited to play the *ammānai* game; Śakti invoked here is a child of 17 months.

Ballad and folk-songs: Ballads and folk-songs are similar; both are in easy attractive language, simple in construction, full of catch words and phrases which help to retain them in the mass mind. Ballads in the English language are considered to be 'just a variety of folk songs'. But they are sufficiently a group in themselves to be classed separately. Folk-songs are not made; folks burst into song occasionally and these are caught by some

and recorded in the people's memory and handed down to posterity by word of mouth. The ballad is not in any way different. Hence there is considerable over-lapping in the ballad and the folk-song concept. There is only one distinguishing feature; the ballad is generally always long and always has a story theme; the element of song is the most predominent feature in the folk-song; it is generally not long, and generally does not have any story theme.

To give an instance, *Pāychalūrp-padikam*, wherein a Harijan girl heaps ridicule on the Brahmins who try to obstruct her wedding with a Brahmin youth, can be called a ballad because of the story background. But it can also be called a folk-song; because it has 11 verses which are sung; the whole poem is short. Similarly the *muḷaippāṭṭu* noticed in this discussion can be considered to be a folk-song and not a ballad.

Kapilar-akaval is also another poem we may mention here. It appears to be a literary piece. But its appeal is such that it can be easily said to be a ballad. Since it is in the terse *āsiriyam* metre, not suited to singing, it may not be called a folk-song. There are besides many *ānandakkaḷippu* verses; they are always long; but they contain generally only a philosophical thought content and no story content. Hence they are to be classified only as folk-songs.

The *kummi* is an action-dance of girls accompanied by singing. Innumerable are the folk-song *kummi* pieces. But some very long ballads also have been composed on the *kummi* form; examples are the two historical ballads, *Kaṭṭabommu kummi* and *Sivagangaik-kummi.*

Some other types of Ballads:

There have been other types of ballad literature, some of which had the story interest while many had not. From the nature of these compositions, we would like to call some of them at least as ballads. *Māriamman tālaṭṭu Muḷaipaṭṭu* and many others are other types of similar compositions. These are also ballads, *Rāmāyaṇa ōḍam, Bharata ēlappaṭṭu* and some similar ones are

long poems, modern and ancient, written in imitation of the boat song form and giving out the entire *itihāsa story*, Some of the *siddha* poems, many *noṇdi-chindu* poems, and many poems of the *aṇdip-paṇḍāram* type may be classed as ballads, although it is equally possible to call them folk-songs. The *Villuppāttu* is of the ballad type.

Māriyamman tālaṭṭu is the most familiar one, sung by the *pūjāris* of the Māriamman temples all over the Tamiḻnādu to the accompaniment of the *uḍukkai.* It is generally a long ballad praying to Māriyamman enshrined at Samayapuram (near Tiruchi) to appear before the assembled group of devotees and bless them. The Māriyamman temple annual festival is celebrated in all the villages in the month of April—May with great eclat. The ten day celebration ends with a fire-walking by the pūjāri and scores of devotees. The song and the drum help to keep the assembled mass of people at a highly frenzied pitch, which is also partly responsible for building up the courage and endurance necessary for fire-walking. Even today, the *Māriyamman tālāṭṭu* holds the field in the matter of ballad singing; there are some temples reputed in certain localities and they attract vast crowds. Though this is termed a *tālāṭṭu*, this is not a *tālāṭṭu* (lullaby) poem, but is merely a ballad.

The *muḷaipāttu* has been developed from the 18th century as a separate type of *prabandha.* It is really a ballad written in the usual ballad metre celebrating the wetting of paddy seeds in hay bundles for germination; the seeds are to be sown the next day. The seeds germinate and grow. This is used for extracting a liquor. The liquor is offered to the Ammai during her worship.

The *oppāri* is a song of lamentation. Women folk when they visited the houses of their friends or relatives on the death of some member thereof used to launch into a long lamentation, which always took the form of some kind of untutored verse fitted with rhyme and alliteration. Generally these lines, called *oppāri*, are classed as folk-songs. But there exists a number of such *oppāri* poems, which are written compositions of considerable length, and

have an arrangement of the contents therein. *Manmatan oppāri* has long been famous.

The form of the Ballad:

All the ballads are long poems. The *Mahābhārata ammānai*, in two parts, has 15,000 lines in the second part alone. The average length of a ballad may be taken as 2,000 lines. The ballad has always a story to tell. There is an invocation, and then the introduction of the subject, and the characters. Then the plot develops and reaches a climax. The climax poses many difficulties. These are surmounted, the object is achieved. Then there is the conclusion. This in short is the general format of the ballad.

The ballad singer is out to entertain. Therefore he employs many devices to sustain the interest of the uneducated people who may either read the ballad or listen to a recital. The narration itself is made in such a manner. The repetitions are towards this end. Another device is to employ a change of metre as occasion demands. Change of metre means change of tune; this awakens further interest; change of metre is not much in ballads like *Pañcha pāṇḍavar vanavāsam*. *Alli arasāni mālai* has a change of metre when the *kuratti* appears on the scene. Her words introducing herself and her country have become very familiar to people at all levels. School children use her song for their *kōlāttam* play. Later ballad writers have adopted many types of *chindu*, the *nondi-chindu* and others.

Another device is the introduction of interesting topics in the narration. We mentioned the *kuratti*. This subject itself makes the ballad come alive to the reader and listener. Not only the metre but very advent of the *kuratti* becomes interesting. The tempo builds up. Whoever is not interested in knowing the future? Many historical figures like the Kaiser in modern days spent large sums of money in trying to get a glimpse of the future. The *kuratti* reads the hand of the love-sick damsel; her techniques make the audience listen to the ballad with rapt attention.

The introduction of *tālāṭṭu* is again an interesting feature. Who is not enchanted by a *tālāṭṭu*? Woman at all periods in

history have been singing the lullaby songs. The singing of a few lullaby lines in the ballads naturally attracted the women-folk. The *Chitrāputran kathai*, *Madurai Veeran kathai* and several others have this topic. The snake charmer is yet another feature. Even today the snake charmer goes about the streets, with his snake basket, playing a snake-tune on his pipe (mahuḍi) and attracts a large crowd. *Suḍalai māḍan pāttu* has introduced this theme into the story. The boat-song form is also a form of familiar light verse. Many philosophical songs have this form.

The ballads employ an effective dialogue form. When two characters speak, the poet does not come between them. No words are introduced to suggest which character speaks which words. In the course of the dramatic narration, this becomes self-apparent. This feature helps to imprint the story graphically in the minds of the listener.

The technique of the Ballads:

A careful study of several ballads will give us a clue to the technique employed by the ballad singer to educate the mass mind. It has always been dinned into our minds in the class room that repetition is bad composition. But we find repetition to be the very soul of the ballad. Hearing a thing in the ballad story, the uneducated man likes to hear it again; he wants it to be repeated; it may be in a different from with different words and different imagery; but the same picture and rhythm are there. It is this primitive feeling to hear again a thing once heard and enjoyed, that makes audiences cry '*en core*' in drama and musical concerts. It is an inherent trait or instinct in all human beings. The ballad maker knows it and without waiting for a call of *encore* he introduces the repetition in all possible places; he has his finger on the pulse of the audience.

We have said the ballad maker uses the term *ammānai* frequently. With the intelligent writer, it serves a purpose. Wherever there is a pause in the story, whenever the writer wants to switch over from one scene to another, and whenver he desires to retrieve a situation wherein the emotions have been worked upto a high

pitch, he uses the term as a sort of refrain. The introduction of the term is equivalent to the ringing down of a curtain. It is a magic word, placed in the right context at the end of a concluding line, it creates the requisite atmosphere both for the singer and narrator and for the listener.

The ballad singer apparently composed his poem, first as he would have narrated the story to an eagerly listening audience He never strove for effect; effect came by itself. He always wrote the language as he spoke it. Grammar was subordinated to force of narration, directness and a certain amount of realism. The writer was obviously one of the masses, and so the language comes to him naturally. without any effort; he never attempted any embellishments. He gave full scope for the free play of emotion. This supplied the necessry form and beauty; the author was content to leave it at that.

But yet, the language is worth a careful study. There are many words which have great force in the context, but which do not however play any part in formal, orthodox poetry, however inspired this may be. Then, the many turns of expression, phrases and analogies are in a class by themselves. Proverbs and, phrases having the force of proverbs flow freely from the lips of the unlettered folk. This element finds full expression in all the classical ballads. Men and women here, in an emotional state, make full use of proverbs. Unconsciously and without the least effort, they freely flow in their words, Usually, proverbs are in single lines equipped with an internal rhyme and alliteration. When uttering a proverb, the ballad is not satisfied with a single line; using the same idea and imagery, it introduces different objects and gives out new versions of the same proverb.

A warrior spurns the hunter-forces which march against him in the following words:—

> Can the timid deer rise against
> the hungry tiger?
> Can the docile cow oppose the fierce lynx?

Will the lynx leave the goat, once it has seen it?
Can the mild deer graze in the jungle of the tiger?

Characterisation has never been strong [illegible] with the epic poets in Tamil literature, except perhaps Kamban. But we find at least in the classical ballads, some attempt at characterisation. The ballads, we have said, were sung to large audiences. The listeners followed the story in all its minutest detail and enjoyed them. They made the story and some of the lines even their own. From generation to generation the story had been handed down, among illiterate people by word of mouth. Vivid portrayal of incidents had been one factor which had made this possible. Another feature is the characteriztion in the ballad. Each of the major characters at least, had a distinct personality. The listeners had to remember the character very vividly, even in the absence of narration. The set of epithets which the writer employed, the nature of the words which the character was made to utter, his action and behaviour, which were uniform in spirit even in different contexts, and the heroism—for without heroism and valour there is no ballad—which he displayed, shed a consistent halo round him, which the author was able to conjure up in a few deft touches. The classical ballad makers had mastered this art fully, and that accounts for their popularity which continues unabated. Later ballad writers had not the requisite command over this art and hence their ballads have not touched the hearts of the masses. In two lines the author is able to make the valour of Arjuna stand as it were physically before us; another few lines draw the massive mountain-like strength of Bhima; one stroke of the pen—and there is Alli, the fiery Amazon-like princess; perhaps today Alli is more alive in all Tamil literature than any other women character, either in classical literature or other ballad literature; and yet she has no place in Vyasa's Mahābhārata but is merely a creation of the ballad writer's imagination out of very scant material in legend. Karṇa is always featured as impulsive, generous and rightous by nature.

An important item in descriptions in all the ballads is the description of jewels. The description is always luxurious and also

often enumerative. When women, particularly princesses are described, the ballad singer sings at length how the lady decked herself with jewels. If we remember that the ballad was written to appeal to the lower classes of society, who did not have any jewels to wear, nor different kinds of dresses to put on, we can understand why the poet makes such a fuss over these. His purpose is to introduce these to the masses and make them familiar with these; though the masses did not own them or handle them, they knew them well through these songs. Through this familiarity, these found place even in the folk-songs. There is short poem in *kali veṇba* metre called *Sundarar vēdupari. Periya purāṇam* narrates an incident in the life of Sundarar where all the riches given to him by his friend prince Ceraman are caused to be snatched away by Śiva through his myrmidons, the *bhutas*, in a place called Tirumurugan-pūṇdi. Sundarar thereupon goes to the shrine of Śiva and relates how he was robbed of the treasures given to him by Cēraman. This is the subject of the *Vēḍupari* (*vēḍu*-hunter, *pari*-snatching away) poem. Here the unknown author (probably of the 18th century) gives a long and interesting list of the trinkets seized from Sundarar. The purpose of this song seems to be only the listing of the various pieces of jewels and trinkets.

Tone of the Ballads:

All ballads begin with a salutation to God. Invariably it is Gaṇēśa and Sarasvati; occasionally some others, like Muruga and Tirumāl. In the entire range of ballad literature, we find Śiva hailed as the Supreme Being; even in the ballads which sing the stories of Rāma and Krishna, Śiva comes in as the Supreme Being.

All ballad end with a benediction, on mankind, on the readers of the ballad, and the listeners thereto.

> 'May you all grow and multiply
> luxuriantly like the banyan tree;
> may your roots spread out like the
> *aṛugu* (hariali grass); and
> may your kin and descendants hold
> together like a bamboo'.

This blessing was included in the first ballad, and has just been embodied in all later ballads without exception; there are no words to say this better. Very lately, more by ballads have added a benediction on the printer also.

All the ballads without any exception uphold the cause of Truth and Righteousness. *Dharma* and the followers of *Dharma* succeed in the end; *adharma* comes to grief. In the same manner, the ballads also emphasize right means for noble ends; nowhere are unjust means justified because the end is just. This is saying a great thing, because the ballads had been composed for the entertainment and edification of the lower classes of society but there has been no compromise whatsoever on values; the higher values cannot appeal to these people, and on this account no compromise is made. Some ballads like the *villupāṭṭu* incidentally narrate the atrocities committed by some of the actors; here the villains are not punished or corrected; but such instances are few and they do not reflect the general trend of ballad poetry.

But yet, some of the ballads are unfortunately very low in tone. The story of Kōvilan in the ballad is a terrible and vulgar story, where the three chief characters Kōvilan, Kannaki and Mādhavi are portrayed as base and vulgar. The general tone of this ballad is very low. Kōvilan is a base fellow, Kannaki is a blood-thirsty woman, pitilessly crying for vengenance, and Mādhavi is a brazen prostitute.

Drink and intoxicants have always been condemned in Tamil literature and the great classics like *Kuṟal* have a chapter on abstinence; the great epics also devote some verses to preach the evils of drink. But here in a few ballads like *kāttavarāyan kathai*, opium, liquor and such other intoxicants have been glorified; to complete the picture, the gun (probably an interpolation of the late 19th century) has been added. Suḍalai māḍan, hero of the *villupāṭṭu* of the same name, and who is a minor deity in all villages in the Tirunelvēli-Kaṇyākumari areas, commits many crimes for which there is no punishment or retribution. We are afraid that this is merely a matter of playing to the gallery, a

feature not repeated in any other ballad. But such instances are few and they do not reflect the general trend of the ballad poetry.

The general tone of the ballads has been always one of a high moral order; they lay down an ineluctable code of conduct, highly honourable; chivalry was always upheld. Generally there is no vulgarity or obscenity. Tales are told with taste and descriptions, and though often exaggerated, are mostly realistic and enjoyable. There is always a ring of classicism in the older ballads, be it description of material, or of persons or narration of events fights.

Metre of the Ballads

Most of the long classical ballads have been sung in the (*tāḻisai veṇ-sendurai*) metre. This has four feet to the line. Often the song is in couplets, two lines having an initial rhyme and the whole narrative running into one long verse or poem. Equally often, the poem is in single lines, with no rhyme; the alliteration in the third foot and the general diction and cadence hold the lines together. Ballads have run upto 15,000 lines, in a long continuous narrative. They had come into existence mostly in the 18th century, although there are exceptions in the 17th.

We call this poem the *ammāṉaip-pāḍal*, because very often all the ballad writers use the word *ammānai*, in the course of the narrative, as a refrain wherever they can. The word has nothing to do with the narration. It takes different forms with different writers; *ammānai* is the most common.

Later ballads employ not only the *veṇ-sendurai* metre but also *viruttam* and other types of verses. In such poems, the *viruttam* generally is used to connect the narrative, to record the reflections of the author and for similar purposes. The narrative portion in the typical ballad metre is generally called *naḍai*, the narrative. In most ballads (e. g. *Kannaḍiyānpōr*), there is a directness of expression; the narrative goes on in a dialogue form. When two characters speak, the dialogue is given as in a drama, without any intervening line to indicate which character spoke which lines. In *Alli arasāṇimālai*, when the *kuṟatti* (gypsy) steps on the stage to read the hand of the love-sick heroine, she invents her own

metre. The gipsy life is one of dance and song, and so the metre itself begins to dance; it is in *chandam*. The effect in the narration is tremendous. This effect is copied in *Draupadi Kuṛam* and *Minnoliyāl kuṛam*.

Various types of *viruttam*, *chanda viruttam*, and *noṇḍi-cindu* have been employed in ballads like *Kaṭṭambommu kathai*, *Divan veṭri* etc. *Khān sahib sanḍai* has been composed wholly in *noṇḍi-cindu*.

But the most unique poem in regard to metre is *Desiṅgarājan kathai*. The opening scenes of the ballad relate to the exploits of a celestial steed. No wonder the whole poem gallops to the stride of the horse. The *veṇ-sendurai* is a leisurely lingering metre; but this ballad is in a special metre, one of fast movement; the words run to the accompaniment of the steed's gallop and the rapid pace befitting action on the battle front. Written with power and force, the language and the metre have still a powerful grip on the mind of the reader, educated or illiterate.

Value of the Ballads

The ballads were sung for the entertainment and edification of the illiterate masses. Both these objects they had fulfilled very eminently. Unlike the classical literature, this was easily understandable to them. The story was a simple one. Two themes, the romantic and the heroic, had the largest part in all types of ballads. The appeal of these two themes is eternal. The uneducated masses, when they read the ballads or had them read to themselves, recited the romantic or the heroic lines. Besides the ballads are written in a language and in a style which had the greatest appeal to the mind. The magic that the poems were able to weave round the people was very powerful. To understand this, they are to be read and enjoyed. To them they are classics—more than Homer or Vālmīki, more than Kambar or Shakespeare are to their respective enlightened audiences.

A semi-literate person such as the *pūjari* of a Māriamman temple recited the ballad from memory in the temple yard, or read it from a palm leaf manuscript, before the assembled audience,

which consisted of the entire population, men and women of the locality. The reading went on for hours, till the early hours of the morning. The readings taught them indirectly through the stories, *dharma* and *adharma*, right and wrong, good behaviour and other social virtues. They fostered such basic virtues as truth, chastity, fearlessness. help to others, sympathy, giving, gratefulness and devotion to God, the parents and the teacher. They developed the strength to bear the misfortunes of life, and the capacity to overcome them. They gave a living faith in religion and taught the people, the simple faith that God will go to their succour. People learnt joy in helping others. They learnt to look upon other women as sisters and mothers. Jealousy was rooted out and contentment was born. Peace reigned in the place of unrest. Love of one's own village led to love of the country and to patriotism. People held great warriors as their ideals in life and tried to emulate them in their own lives. Civilised social behaviour was set to a pattern.

The ballads may be said to have preserved a continuity of the Tamiḻ culture both through the ages and across the different social levels.

They are yet valuable to us who study them now. The give us a peep into the life of the people of an ancient past, their beliefs and faiths. The ballads generally describe things with a gusto—be it food, dress, ornaments, fight etc. The variety and the level of this description we do not have in the orthodox literature, the *Sen-Tamiḻ* works. In every description the ballad has a large amount of repetition. The same things and the same description are repeated often. The language, the talk, proverbs, the manner of behaviour—all these we have here with a freshness and an exhilarating directness, rare indeed outside the field of the ballads. The vocabulary in particular and the epithets which remind us of the classical Homerian epithets in classical mythology are a study in themselves; they also provide a vast field for semantics and linguistic studies. The expressions here are mostly without a trace of vulgarity and obscenity. It is really strange to find all narration in the ballads on a dignified level. Many literary figures of speech are employed here with appropriateness and vigour.

Some of the ballads are also useful for anthropological studies-the belief of the primitive people regarding the soul, birth and death, heroes and hero worship, deification of even bad characters and their worship, and so on.

Astrology and sooth-saying wield a great influence over all classes of people and here particularly over the masses. It is the astrologer who does all the havoc in the *Kannaḍiyan pōr* ballads. A spy, assuming the role of an astrologer, causes the Pāṇḍiya even to demolish his ramparts and build them afresh, which results in his own downfall. Sooth-saying by a *kuṟatti* is a familiar theme in formal literature; perhaps it is copied there from folklore and ballad. The several ballads by the name of *kuṟam* and the advent of the *kuṟatti* in many other ballads like *Alli Arasāṇimālai* illustrate the faith which the masses had in such sooth-saying and reading of the future through reading of the hand. The tendency to attach great importance to the words of the sooth-sayer is exploited in certain ballads by the heroes and similar chief characters themselves to achieve their own ends.

Omens are a similar feature. Everywhere we may see that the ill-omens predominate; they give a premonition of impending doom and finally culminate in tragedy. The historical ballads like Desiṅgu, Kaṭṭabommu and Iravikkuṭṭi give vivid pictures of ill omens seen by the hero or his wife or mother just before he embarks on a fight, and the result is the hero's defeat and death

Authorship

One important characteristic of the classic ballad, as of the folk-song, is its anonymity. The first dated ballad composition is is the *Ramappayyan ammānai*, written just after 1639 A.D. Some among the group of the Mahābhārata ballads seem to have been written round the year 1600 (*Pañchapāndavar Vanavāsam* and *Alli Arasāṇi mālai*). They were all popular with the masses, and they seem to have satisfied their thirst for reading and for listening to romantic stories. All of them are romantic stories and are mere fiction. Certainly a gifted poet wrote these ballads, but embellishments might have been added to them through the years, at the

hands of gifted narrators. In the next century, a plausible story for its authorship was invented.

Perhaps the very popularity of ballad erases the name of the author from popular memory. All these ballads had been composed at a time when there was no printing and had been handed down only by word of mouth for some generations. This probably was responsible for forgetting the name of the author. And to the lay people, only the poem was important and they did not worry about the author. Hence perhaps the anonymity of all' these poems.

Almost all ancient ballads are foisted on one Pugaḻēndi. Vīrāsāmi Cheṭṭiyār in his *Vinōdarasa Mañjari* (1879) invested a funny (vinōda) story and it has since stuck. Pugaḻēndi according to him was a court poet of the Pāṇḍiya ruler, who was humiliated by Oṭṭakūttar. It is mere fiction, because Pugaḻēndi actually lived 100 years later than Oṭṭakkūttar; so the two could not have seen each other. However, the legend invented by Cheṭṭiyār came to stay. We find however that he is noted as the author not only for the above named series of Mahābhārata ballads, but also for *Nallathangal kathai. Chitraputran kathai, Kāthavarāyon kathai* and the late *Desingu Rājan kathai*: the historical Desingu Rajan died in 1713 A.D. However it is to be noted that Bhavānandam Pillai has noted the author of *Chitraputran Kathai* as Pugaḻēndi II.

But with the universal adoption of printing in the 19th century, we find the names of the later ballad composers invariably preserved. Scores of ballads of all categories have been composed by various types of writers and they had all been printed However, these had not the spontaneous appeal of the older ballads, and today we do not find a single popular ballad among all these later compositions.

Classification

All poetry in the Tamiḻ language and for that matter in any classical language, can be classified under two broad divisions, the romantic and the heroic. Tamiḻ classical poetry of two thousand years ago had taken on this classification. Some five centuries

later, religious or devotional poetry had grown as a major division in literature. In the field of balladry also, we can easily apply this classification. Almost all the early ballads—such as *Alli Arasāṇi mālai Pavalakkoḍi mālai* and a host of the others are romantic ballads. Most of the later ballads of the 18th–19th centuries are historical ballads, ballads of the heroic type. In between the two periods, we have two distinct types—the sociological ballads such as *Aṇṇamār kathai, Kallaḷagar ammānai* etc. and the devotional ballads, which are many.

Another way of classifying the ballads is to group them in two main divisions in a general way—the classical and the literary. By a classic ballad, we mean one whose authorship is not known, one which had been known to the common people for a good length of time and enjoyed by them, not in the written form, but by word of mouth, one which does not strive at literary effect and one whose story had been simple and familiar to the common people for a considerably long time. Examples of such ballads are *Pañçapāṇḍavar Vanavāsam, Alli Arasāṇi mālai, Desiṅgu Rājan kathai, Chitraputran kathai* and *Nallathaṅgāl kathai.* We do not know who composed them. If tradition, originated perhaps by Virāsāmi Chettiyār, says that Pugaḷēndi composed them, there is no harm in our accepting that tradition and calling the authors Pugaḷēndi II, Pugaḷēndi III and so on.

The literary ballad is one whose authorship is generally known, one which came to be written after the introduction of printing, one which makes a conscious attempt at literary effect and one with which the common people are not so familiar. Examples of such ballads are *Magha purāṇa ammānai, Rāmappayyan ammānai, Mahābhārata ammānai* and *Kaliyuga Mahā Kāviyam.* These we may assume were never intended to be sung by the masses. The authors were captivated by the *ammānai* form of the past and by the present legends and so wrote these stories on the same form.

We shall group all the available ballads under a score of heads and say here a few words about each group.

1. Ballads from Literature:

Unlike the West, Tamiḻ literature had existed a long time earlier than the ballads. So some ballads are imitations of classical poems. Examples are *Kōvilan kathai* and *Siṟuthoṇḍan kathai.* The first is a very vulgar adaptation of *Silappadhikāram*. In the place of the chief heroinee and hero in the original, we have here Kaṇṇaki, a terrible woman crying for vengeance, Mādavi an avaricious prostitute and Kōvilan a vastral. The Siṟuthoṇḍan story taken from *Periya Purāṇam* is equally on a lower level.

2. Ballads from the Itihāsas:

The *Mahābhārata* has more than 20 adaptations in ballad form, Many are novel stories, not found in the original. They have been immensely popular for over 400 years. Chief of them are *Alli Arasāṇi mālai, Pañcha Pāṇḍavar Vanavāsam* and *Bharata ammānai.* The *Rāmāyaṇa* has not been so popular in balladry, There are only a few ballads and they are merely literary and not popular. The *Kanda Purāṇam* has also given rise to many ballads.

3. Ballads from the Purāṇas:

The stories of Markaṇḍēyar, Manickavāçakar, Chitrāputran and Amarāvathi and the *Magha purāṇa* are some of the ballads of this type. Of these Chitrāputran is most popular. There is also a festival for him on the *Pourṇami* (Full Moon) day of Chitrai.

4. Ballads from Folksongs:

Many *kuṟam* in ballads belong to this type. *Draupadi kuṟam Vidwan kuṟam, Minnoḷiyāl kuṟam* etc. may be mentioned, besides *Māriamman tālaṭṭu* and the like.

5. Ballads of local Shrines:

Two ballads celebrating the penance of Śaktis, Gōmati and Kamākshi, performed for drawing the grace of Śiva are available. They are purely literary.

6. Romantic Ballads:

These are naturally many and are of perennial interest to the unlettered public. Most of them relate to episodes from the *Mahābhārata.*

7. *Historical Ballads*:

These constitute a large group. Ballads are available on the exploits of (a) Rāmappaiyan and his wars (b) Desiṅgu Rājan of Giṅgee (c) Khān Sahib (d) Kaṭṭa Bomman (e) Marudu brothers and some others. All these are long ballads, and they are extremely valuable for the historic material which they supply for the reconstruction of the history of the country, from the middle of 17th century to the middle of the 19th. All of them have been written in a very direct and forceful style. Rāmappaiyan ballad, though a literary one, is done remarkably well. Of course there is no equal to the *Desiṅgu Rajan kathai* in all balladry. These ballads are also important for the lot of interesting details of war and war-practices which they supply. Many of the terms of horses etc. found in them are now familiar household words.

One or two ballads of the Muslims, celebrate the battles of Muslim leaders in Arabia. They go by the name of *paḍa pōr*. A number of minor ballads refer to the battles in Nañji nādu.

8. *Sociological Ballads*:

Rarely do we have a sociological ballad. *Kallaḻagar ammānai* of Madurai and *Aṇṇamārswāmy kathai* of Coimbatore deal with the quarrels between different clans.

9. *Ballads glorifying criminals*:

The law-abiding citizen does not evoke any admiration from anybody. In his case, there is no extraordinary activity calling for attention from any one. But it is the law-breaker here who claims all attention from the masses. The masses believe in general, that the law is made principally to protect the interests of the higher classes of people. In their view, a hero is one who breaks that law. Hence a law-breaker, a vagabond or a scoundre becomes a hero in their eyes. The ordinary man may not himself dare to break the law; but he is all admiration for the outlaw. The law-breaker is immersed in drink and all the vices, which stand condemned in any decent society high or low. Some adventure and dare-devilry characterise his exploits and these are meat and drink for the mass mind. To them, the law-breaker can come to

no harm. No punishment will overtake him, nor retribution. He glories in his acts of violence and vice and that is his great virtue. Some specimens of such ballads are *Kāthavarāyan ammānāi* of Tañjāvur, *Suḍalaimāḍan kathai* of Tirunelvēli, *Madurai Viran* of Madurai, *Sinnathambi kathai* of Nāgercoil etc.

10. Philosophical Ballads:

Many poems as *Jñāna ammānai* and *Kāyakkappal*, are philosophical ballads. Probably in the early 17th century, Brahmin widows who led a life of penance and rigorous austerity composed these poems, to pass away their time and to engage themselves in higher thinking. Many such poems continue to move this community even to this day; they are handed down only by the word of mouth. Some of them are also available in print.

11. Ethical Ballads:

The *Kapilai kathai* may be mentioned here, where a cow gave itself up to be eaten up by a tiger in order to keep its promise to return after feeding its own calf. This is a fine story where the quality of truth is upheld and attributed even to the animal.

12. Tragic Ballads:

Although tragedy may not be common feature in Indian poetry, we have a most powerful ballad *Nallathangāl kathai*, She could not tolerate the cruelty of her sister-in-law and ended by killing herself and her seven children. Wandering beggars sing her songs even today in a most moving manner to the accompaniment of a one-stringed harp.

13. Comic Ballads:

Somehow this type seems to be rare. *Vinaḍivinan kathai* of Nāgercoil area is probably a rare specimen. Here a worthless fellow cheats everybody and finally own up his clever activities and is a made a minister of the king. *Eṇiyēṭrem* where Duryodhana is held up to ridicule by all the Mahābhāratha personatities for his unlawful love towards Subadhra, sister of Krishna and of Arjuna, is the only example of a classical comic ballad.

14. The Others:

There have been several Jain, Christian and Muslim ballads, which are known for their literary value.

15. The Villuppāṭṭu:

This is peculiar to Tirunelvēli and Nāgercoil. Many stories are sung as *villup-pāṭṭu*.

The *villupāṭṭu* means a bow song; it is so called because it is sung to the accompaniment of the striking on the string of a large bamboo bow. Sometimes the bow is even made of metal or bent piece of split palmyrah trunk. The ends of the bow are tied together so as to create a high tension in the string and the bow is held, ends up. It is made to rest on the mouth (neck) of a large sturdy earthern pot. The *villuppāṭṭu* is in fact a crude orchestra, where many take part in the vocal singing and in playing the instruments. The leader holds a striker (a pice of short stick) in each hand. The strikers also have an intricate cymbal fixtures which create their own jingle when he strikes the string of the bow with each striker. He may strike along the whole length of the bow, any where he likes, to produce the desired note. The striking, causes notes to issue from the bow, from the pot below, from the bells on the bow and from the strikers themselves. At the same time another player strikes at the mouth of the pot with a broad cardbord which can fully close it; his left hand plays on the pot with a piece of metal, issuing a sound like a *ghaṭa-vādya* (pot instrument used in formal musical concerts). There are others playing other instruments in the group such as the *uḍukku*, separate cymbals, and so on. A few persons vocally capable of reaching large audiences, follow the leader and repeat his song in a high-pitched voice. The singing is the chief fector, while all the musical instrumental side help mainly to mark time. In days when there was no microphone, the *villuppāṭṭu* carried the sound of the singing to vast audiences, extending to some thousands, often till the early hours of the morning.

16. Modern Ballads:

The most outstanding ballad is the *Gāndhi Mahān kathai* of Koṭhamaṅgalam Subbu. Subbu was deeply immersed in all the

ballads of Tamiḻ, beginning from *Alli Arasāni mālai* right upto the modern days; he had also studied the folk-songs of Tamiḻnāḍu. He had the patriotic fervour of the pre-Indendence days. He had seen through the newspapers the righteous fight of the Indian people for freedom, under the leadership of Gāndhi.

The promise of Independence to India made him write the story of Mahātma Gāndhi in ballad form. His ballad, a very long one, was instantly popular. All the tricks of the ballad trade are effectively employed by him. He utilises all the metres including the gallop in the Desiṅgu rājan story. This one poem perhaps gives the lie to the statement that the ballad has no future. Bhārati's *Kuyilpāṭṭu* may also be taken as a ballad, but it is a literary one and has some appeal only to the elite.

17. Modern Ballads on social reform:

The *Nañji Nāṭṭu Marumakkalvali Mānmiyam* was directed against the matriarchal system of inheritance in Nañji nāḍu. It was also powerful tirade against the existing law with some salutary effect on the law of the country. Another is the *Amirtavaḷḷi mālai* by S. Murugappa. It is a powerful plea for widow re-marriage.

The Broadside Press:[1]

They were indeed glorious days in the era of balled making, the years round 1890, even upto the end of first quarter of the 20th century. Every major accident in the country, or even a trivial local tragedy was grist of the mill of the ballad singer. The moment he heard of the event, he wrote his ballad overnight, had it printed the next morning and himself sang it that evening in small street junctions in towns and large village. The booklet was generally priced at a quarter of an anna (a paisa and half). Be it the crash of the Arbuthnot Bank, the bombing of Madras by the German Submarine Emden in 1914, the 1924 floods of the

1. The singing of a local tragic event into a sort of short ballad and the printing of it into a single sheet, printed only one side of a broad sheet was termed 'the Broadside Press' in the evolution of British balladry. We may call the corresponding short ballad described here the '*Kālaṇā-chindu*', the ballad sold for a quarter of an anna.

Kāvēry, the fire in the Madras Park Fair Exhibition or in the Madras Congress House, or one of the railway crashes, the ballad maker was ready with his pathetic poem. When any person commits an act of great notoriety and is talked about, there is a cheap balladist to write about it. When one Shanmukha Grāmaṇi, a rich man of north Madras who had several murders to his credit, was sentenced to death by the court, several ballads (or '*kolai-chindu*') were written the day after the judgement of the court was pronounced. The evacuation from Madras after two bombs were dropped by a Japanese plane in April 1942 was the subject of many ballads. It was composed in several metres like the *nondi—chindu*, *ānandakkaḷippu*, *kummi* and the like, to offer variety to the singer and the listener, and gave a graphic account of the tragedy in song. It was always tragedy that made this poet burst into instantaneous song. The masses heard him. The semi-literates bought a copy, learnt to spell out the song and began to sing it. There was no radio broad-casting then; the newspapers had not penetrated to the villages as they have done now; and people did not have the habit of thirsting for news. The ballad was in a sense the broadcaster of the chief news with a descriptive touch. The singer had collected all the news he could, added his own missing links and had put them all into song.

The popularity of the newspapers and the installation of the radio sets had rung the death knell to this tribe of bards. These bards were able to evoke some sympathy, some literary taste, and some capacity for enjoyment, which the radio and the newspapers had never done.

Gone indeed are those glorious days.

Printing history:

The printing history of the ballads reveals several distinct phases in the printing of the various ballads. *Kittēri ammāl ammānai*, attributed to Beschi, might perhaps have been the earliest ballad to be printed; this was in the first half of the 18th century. The Christian missionaries introduced printing in the Tamil language and this *ammānai* was naturally one of the early books to be

printed by them. Printing of ballads begins only after the year 1800.

The first phase of printing is what is known among the knowing people as the '*gujilikkaḍai*' edition. There were a number of cheap reprints of the classical ballads in a competitive spirit and their books were sold generally in a number of shops near the Kandaswāmi temple in Madras. These shops were known to bibliophiles upto the first half of the 20th century as the '*gujilikkaḍai*'.[2] The '*gujilikkaḍai*' is the name generally used for the shops at the southern end of Dēvarājamudali street, in George Town. There were in those days publishers who made it their business to keep these books such as *Alli*, *Kōvilan*, *Pulandiran*, *Dēsiṅgu*, *Siruttoṇḍan* etc.—always available in the market for sale. The book was priced 12 annas (75 paise) but was always sold at half the price. These books were first reeled off over the treadle as the compositor composed them, without any editing or even proof reading.

The second phase of the printing brings into the picture Bhavanāndam Piḷḷai. The ballads somehow seem to have captured the fancy of Bhavānandam Piḷḷai who was Assistant Commissioner of Police in Madras. He brought out nine such ballads. They were all printed in good print, on good paper, without printing errors, and often illustrated with photographs of actors, specially costumed and made to act the parts. They were all bound in full blue superior calico (those were pre-first World-War days) with full gilt back lettering. But such has never been the good fortune of the other ballads. They were generally printed on paper of the lowest quality;

2. I happened recently (1974) to visit the shops in my search for ballad poems. Where there were more than half a dozen such shops selling books by the different printing presses, I now saw only one. Arumukham whom I had seen as an young man, at the close of the second World War was now a lone old man, still running his book shop, others adjacent to his shop had all closed down by the years after 1950 and turned to other kinds of business. After the end of the War, this *gujilikkaḍai* books trade had to close down, because the customers who were patrons of literature like the ballad, no longer bought these books but went in for modern light reading, with semi-nude jacket pictures.

there was no proof reading. There were indeed several cheap press which made it a point always to keep these books in circulation; these books were never known to be out of print. Hats off to those publishers but for whom the ballads would never survived the scorn and derision of the pedantic scholar!

Some special features of that printing may be mentioned here, in appreciation of the work of the early publishers. One is the large type. As pointed out already, the print was intended for the semi-literates and so the type was large. Another feature is the provision of appropriate headings at suitable places in the course of the narration. They had also printed full page illustrations at appropriate places. To the modern eye, those may appear very generally, woodcuts; they lines merely suggested the subject—the human being, or animal or the content. When looking at the pictures, the illiterate man or woman recalled the entire story and lines of the ballad which he or she remembered. The whole poem came alive to them as it were. Thus the pictures served a psychological purpose immensely.

Another feature was the cost of the books. The books were not purchased and read by the elite—the educated higher classes, nor by the scholar and the pandit. They were purchased by working-class men and women. A short ballad of 100 pages (demy size) was priced then at twelve annas but was given out for six annas (37 paise). Investing six annas on a book, was a fortune spent for the semi-literate. The book though in a torn and dog-eared condition, was kept on in the family for generations. This was possible only if it was printed on news-print and bound together in a cheap manner. Hence we cannot blame the publisher for getting up the books on the cheapest paper, with the cheapest binding, The purchaser was certainly grateful that at least this much was done for him.

The *villuppaṭṭu* has been very popular in the Tirunelvēli and Nāgercōil areas. Many printers in these places including Trivandrum, had been issuing in print many ballads and *villuppaṭṭu* songs.

As late 1968 and 1971 we find a native physician of Nāgercoil (Arumuga Perumāl Nāḍār) has been publishing several ballads in *villuppaṭṭu* form in the Nāgercoil area.

The third phase is the printing of *Rāmappayyan ammānai* by Rao Sahib S. Vaiyāpuri Piḷḷai. This is a carefully edited text, with an English introduction.

We now enter upon the fourth phase where some ballads have been published by the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library and the Tañjāvūr Saraśvati Mahāl Library. They were all published with Government money. All these have been published after Vaiyāpuri Piḷḷai's edition was released; yet they do not appear to have profitted by this edition. T. P. Mīnākshi Sundaranār's edition of *Magha purāna ammānai* seems to lay emphasis only on the linguistic aspect.

The fifth phase is the publication of several ballads edited by N. Vanamāmalai for the Madurai University. The ballads are all said to be historical and the editor has taken great pains to explain the history and the back-ground of the events narrated. However the author labours under one great handicap; in everthing he sees a class struggle, or a caste war, which may not be there after all. Besides, the verse form has not been given proper attention and there is no numbering of the lines or the verses. This is a serious defect. Proper attention has not been given to the marking of the lines, scansion and other verse arrangements. Even ordinary scriptory errors and printing mistakes have not been set right. The printing of all available ballads, printed as well as manuscript, into a uniform and well edited series of about a dozen volumes is a desideratum.

Age of the Ballads:

When the dates of the greatest of the Tamiḻ formal and classical literature such as *Tolkāppiyam* and *Tirukkuṟal* are still undecided, there is nothing wrong in admitting that the dates of the ballads are not definitely known. English literature claims that its earliest ballad was *Judas* of the 13th century and that it is the earliest piece of ballad literature in all European literature.

That may be so; formal literature in that language came a little later and it is a well established fact that ballad literature there was earlier in origin. In regard to Tamiḻ literature, formal literature is available in large volumes for more than two thousand years and ballad literature is available only from a very much later period.

The number of available ballads here is large and we find that they are spread over the last three or four hundred years. The earliest in point of time is *Rāmappaiyan ammānai.* Written immediately after 1639, which was the date of Ramappaiyan's expedition against Saḍaikkaṉ Sētupati. The only earlier ballads that could be thought of are *Alli Arasāṇi mālai* group. It is evident therefore that this group belongs to a period earlier than 1639 A.D.

The period 1550 to 1600 may be taken as the period when the first ballads were written. Considering the fact that a large number of *Purāṇams*, large and small have been composed in the 16th century, we believe that they provided the necessary literary climate for the writing of literature for the enjoyment of the masses also and thus the first ballads took shape.

The two ballads *Alli Arasāṇi mālai* and *Pañcha Pāṇḍavar Vanavāsam* could have been the earliest ballads composed during the period mentioned. The others like *Ēṇi-Yētram*, *Pavaḷakkoḍi mālai* (on the lines of *Alli*) and *Abhimanyu Sundari mālai* might have followed immediately thereafter. The *Alli* group of ballads was popular among the women folk in the higher levels of society. This feature made possible the fast expansion of literacy.

The early ballads, of a *purāṇic* character, full of romance and worship of legendary heroes, came into existence from the latter half of the 17th century. The political unrest in the country, the ruthless expansion of the European powers, all gave rise to a crop of popular ballads praising local heroes and those who attempted to put up any opposition to the growing British power. By the latter half of 17th century, all types of ballads became sizable in volume. By the next century, the 18th, the ballad literature had become rich. They had grown in variety and size and also in number.

Of course quite a number of such compositions have not seen the light of day. Many had perished in palm leaf manuscript form and still languish in the same form. Yet, the known and the available literature is sufficiently vast.

The fast life the 20th century is hardly suited to ballad composition. The advent of printing and easy means of communications have done away with such writing. But it is this century that has uncovered unknown areas of balladry; not only that, variants of many known ballads are also often coming to light and in this way the contribution of the 20th century is certainly important.

Thus we may be able to place the age of the ballads in the period from the latter half of the 16th to the latter half of the 19th centuries. This does not of course mean that ballads were exclusively produced then; it only signifies that almost all the ballads had come to be written during that period.

Study of the Ballads:

Although the ballads have been current in print for the last 75 years and more, study of the ballads is a totally novel features of literary studies. The upholders of formal literature—the scholars and the academic pandits—would not touch them even with a pair of tongs. Bhavānandam Piḷḷai no doubt printed some ballads neatly but he had not caused any study to be made. He had only tried to preserve relics of antiquity for a polished age, atoning for the rudeness of style and taking liberties with the text. Although his work was not followed up, it makes the first phase in the recognition and study of the literature.

Scholars of classical literature would wax eloquent over the few short *ammānai* poetical pieces in *Silappadikāram* and the *Kaḷambakam* poems, but would not study a long *ammāni* narrative. This gulf between the learned and the masses came to be closed with the advent of Indian Independence and now we find in the second half of the 20th century, balladry being installed as an area of literature on its own right. The struggle for Independence ushered in an era of reappraisal of the past, in all spheres of

Indian art and letters. The freedom fight under Gandhiji's leadership yoked the masses for the first time to the thick of the fight and the heroism and selflessness which the masses exhibited in the fight caused their ways of life and their lore to be studied by the elite in that fight. Thus began the era of the study of folk-songs and ballads (as enlarged versions of the folksongs). It should be remembered that the study was first made not by Tamil writers or scholars but by fighters in the freedom struggle.

The complimentary reference by Bharati to folk-songs and ballads in his *Kuyil pāṭṭu* gave a fillip to ballad study. By a strange irony, Rao Sāhib Vaiyāpuri Piḷḷai's edition of the historical ballad, *Rāmappaiyan ammānai*, done as the last piece of work by him in the University of Madras and completed in 1944 was dated 1-9-46 and published only in 1951 five years after his retirement. It is well known how this work was frowned upon by scholars of the day. Many could not understand the inter-relation between folk literature and history and could not appreciate the wealth of contemporary historical materials which this ballad brought to the fore. Yet it marks the second phase in the study of ballads; it ushered in an era of scrupulous editing, neat printing and scientific scholarship in this field. The editing of many ballads by other scholars and institutions follow in the wake of Vaiyāpuri Piḷḷai's work.

The third phase is the recognition of ballad music. Music has come now to be recognized as having equal importance as the text itself. The recognition accorded to *villup-pāṭṭu* as an item of folk-entertainment as well, reached the higher levels of society. A great impetus to this phase was given by Kothamaṅgalam Subbu by his own rendering of his composition *Gāndhi Mahān Kathai* as a ballad-cum-folk-music piece of entertainment. Most modern, it yet had the greatest appeal. He was a film figure in the higher levels of society but somehow he was able to identify himself with the mass mind; his ballad was an instantaneous success.

All this is not enough. There is yet a fourth phase. This may consist of several aspects. One is the collecting of all available ballads in manuscripts, editing and publishing them in good print

as handy decent uniform volumes. This implies the re-issue of even all published ancient ballads as critical editions. A second aspect is the cataloguing and classifying of all ballads and their bibliographical material for study. And lastly the study of individual ballads and their change through the years and with the different regions of Tamiḻ Nādu. This study would include words, phrases, idioms and proverbs; regional vocabulary and regional variation; dress and ornaments; battles, weapons and the ethics of warfare; habits and customs and beliefs; position of women, other family and social relationship; concept of God and the life hereafter; also drink and debauchery and scoundrelism; comparison of the ballad versions with the original literary poems, purāṇas and itihāsās.

The future of the Ballads:

The ballad, like any other composition, or even a work of art, is a child of the age. There was a time when society was closely knit, when it cherished memories of the past, when it revered its heroes, when every member of the society participated in the joy of singing and dancing, when it did a good amount of physical work everyday and wanted to relax and knew the joy of creation. All these elements have now ceased to exist, Today we have a medley of men and women, a jumble of individuals, who are mostly automatons, but there is no society. There is no cohesion in society, no common goal or aspiration, no common joy, or sympathy in grief. People are just thrown together by circumstances, not of their own choosing.

Again what are called modern amenities, have cut at the root of all corporate living. The quick means of transport and communications, the radio and the cinema, have all failed to teach men the significance of community living. They have failed to make man realise his responsibility to society and to make him take an active part in its joys and sorrows. The ballad was in a sense the repository of the joys and sorrows, of harmless goals and of the lofty aspirations of society; it was also an expression of its music and its poetry, not to say dancing. Amenities have now made him a passive observer, far from being an active participant.

Who will be interested hereafter in a ballad poem, in listening to its recital? Who will write a ballad in the future?

With the advent of prose and the introduction of printing for disseminating news and knowledge, the ballads have already receded into the background and have ceased to be a form of composition. They had their day and they have now gone, never more to return.

Thiru Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, M. A.: Thiru M. Arunachalam's talk on "The Ballad in Tamiḻ literature" is informative analytical and thought-provoking. He has touched on almost all aspects of the Ballad and made the subject very interesting. Seeing as I do from the Telugu point of view, I found that much of what he has said about Tamiḻ applies also to Telugu. Excepting that they are in different languages Telugu and Tamiḻ ballads are almost identical in thought, content and expression. It is strange that they have much in common. Even though there was a large volume of folk literature from very ancient times it is somewhat peculiar that the Ballad in Tamiḻ and Telugu and probably in Kannaḍa, should have suddenly appeared in the seventeenth century A.D. only and not earlier. As the learned speaker has pointed out it was perhaps due to the appearance of foreigners and their interfering in Indian politics, acquiring territory and power. The native Rājahs opposed the Europeans, fought against odds and perished as heroes fighting for independence. The themes, the manner of composition, rendering meter and the sentiments expressed all have such a similarity that one ballad looks either like an imitation or translation of the other. For *Desiṅgurājan Kathai* in Tamiḻ, we have the *Katha of Rāja Desiṅgu* in Telugu and, the story of Katta Bomman reminds us of the ballad about the siege of Bobbili. These are historicals, true to facts, with little of conventionalism and give a graphic description of events, men and manners that the common folk, for whom they are intended feel their hearts touched. They excel dramas, in their thrilling effects.

Ballads were popular all over India, as popular country-side entertainment even during early times, though not of the same pattern. We have ballads of the early Muslim and Rajput periods

like the Prithvi Rāi Raso and, Gujarat was famous for popular songs. We hear much of the Celtic Bards and even Lycurgus of ancient Sparta was much of a bard. As our leader of the seminar has rightly observed ballad composition was resorted to as a popular entertainment at times when nations were threatened by foreign invasions and nationalism was in danger. Scholars will do well to conduct research taking an overall picture of ballads of different languages and nations and base their conclusion on comparative study.

Prof. P. Alalasundaram: That Tamiḻ has a rich literary heritage is well known to all scholars. Tamiḻ literature is ancient and can be divided into three divisions as Literature of Saṅgam Age, Medieval Age and Modern Age. Through its literature a knowledge of life and the civilization of the Tamiḻs could be obtained. So we have to cherish and preserve our literature. Only learned people can learn with pleasure the literature of the Saṅgam age. But the Ballad songs of Tamiḻ Nāḍu can be learnt with pleasure by the educated and the uneducated, by the layman and the poets. The minor literature of Tamiḻ has been divided into 96 kinds of *Prabhandas* like *Nānmaṇimālai, Kalambakam, Kuṛam, Paḷḷu* etc. Kuṛam in later days was named as *Kuṛa Vañchi.* Both *Paḷḷu* and *Kuṛavanchi* are included in Ballad songs. Apart from these there are folk Ballads embracing *Puṛaṇa* stories like *Alli Arasāṇi Mālai, Nalla Thaṅgāl Kathai, Pavaḷakkoḍi Mālai, Kāthavarāyan Kathai.* There are also historically based ballads like *Dēsiṅgu Rājan Kathai, Ramappaiyan Ammānai, Veerpāṇḍiya Kattabomman Kathai* etc. Also there are spiritually based ballads which include ballads like *Siddar Pāḍal, Chandragiriyār's Ekkālakaṇṇi.* Apart from these, professional songs of boatmen, water lifters, *kummi* players, Lullabies, dirges, Villuppāṭṭu, priest's Drum Music etc. are included in folk Ballads.

We will now examine some of the many Folk Ballads.

Kuṛavanchi: *Meenakshi Ammai Kuṛam* is one of the ballads sung by Kumaragurupara Swāmigaḷ of the 17th century. In it the song in which the hero asks a *Kuṛaṭṭi* for omens and the Kuṛaṭṭi's reply explaining her life activities, is pleasant to read;

கொழுங்கொடியின் விழுந்தவள்ளிக் கிழங்குகல்லி எடுப்போம்
Kolunkodiyin vilundavallik kilangu kalli eduppōm

குறிஞ்சிமலர் தெரிந்து முல்லைக்கொடியில் வைத்துத் [தொடுப்போம்
Kurinchi malar terindu mullaikkodiyil vyttu toduppōm

பழம்பிழிந்த கொழுஞ்சாறும் தேறலும்வாய் மடுப்போம்
Palampilinda koluncharum tēralumvāi maduppōm

செழுந்தினையும் நறுந்தேனும் விருந்தருந்தக் கொடுப்போம்
Cheluntinaiyum naruntēnum virundarundak koduppōm

சினவேங்கைப் புலித்தோலின் பாயலிற்கண் படுப்போம்
Çinavēngai pulitōlin pāyalirkan paduppōm

எழுந்து கயற்கணிகாலில் விழுந்துவினை கெடுப்போம்
Elundukayark kanikālil vilunduvinai keduppōm

எங்கள்குறக் குடிக்கடுத்த இயல்பிது காண் அம்மே
Engal kurak kudikkadutha iyalbidu kān Ammāy

(We will dig the tapioca from the fertile plants; we will tie garlands of Kurinchi flower into Mullai vines; we will drink rich juice of fruits and *tēral* (a kind of toddy). We will offer red Tinai and sweet honey to our guests. We will sleep on the skins of the fierce lions and tigers. On getting up we will worship at the feet of the Goddess. This is the traditional way of life of our Kura community).

Next we will examine a poem in which a Kuratti speaks of the bounties of her native mountains as depicted in the *Kurrālak-kuravanchi* sung by Tirikūda Rāsappa Kavirāyar of the 18th century. Here the Kuratti describes her native hills:

கொல்லிமலை எனக்கிளைய செல்லிமலை அம்மே
Kollimalai yenakkilaiya Çellimalai Ammāy

கொழுநனுக்குக் காணிமலை பழநிமலை அம்மே
Kolhunanukku Kānimalai Palanimalai Ammāy

எல்லுலவும் விந்தைமலை எந்தைமலை அம்மே
Ellulavum Vindaimalai Endaimalai Ammāy

இமயமலை என்னுடைய தமயன் மலை அம்மே
Imayamalai yennudaiya tamayan malai Ammāy

சொல்லரிய சாமிமலை மாமிமலை அம்மே
Çollariya Sāmimalai Māmimalai Ammāy

தோழிமலை நாஞ்சினாட்டு வேள்விமலை அம்மே
Tōḻimalai Nañchināttu Vēḷvimalai Ammāy

செல்இனங்கள் முழவுகொட்ட மயிலினங்கள் அம்மே
Çel inangal muḻavukotta mayilinangaḷ Ammāy

திரிகூடமலையெங்கள் செல்வமலை அம்மே
Tirikoota Malayengaḷ çelva malai Ammāy

(Kollimalai is younger to my favourite hill's mother; Palani hills has been the dower to my husband; the broad Vindya hills is my father and the Himalayas are my brother's hills; the holy Swāmi hills is that of my mother-in-law and the Vēlvimalai of Nañçinād is that of my companion. Our favourite hill is the Tirikūṭa Hills where peacocks dance to the tune of the beating noise of the white ants).

Next we will look into a stanza in *Bhoopāla Kuṛavañchi* by Sivakkoḷundu Dēsikar of the 19th century. This too is a description by Kuṛatti describing the beauty of the Hills.

விராலிமலை சோலைமலை சுவாமிமலை அம்மே
Viṛalimalai Sōlaimalai Swāmi malai Ammāy

விளங்குமெங்கள் குலவள்ளிக்குகந்தளித்தோம் அம்மே
Viḷangumengaḷ Kulavaḷḷik kugandaḷithōm Ammāy

பிரான்மலையும் சிராமலையும் பிறமலையும் அம்மே
Piranmalayum Çiramalayum piṛamalayum Ammāy

பிறைமுடிகள் வைத்திருக்கும் பிரான்மலைகள் அம்மே
Piṛaimuḍigaḷ vaittirukkum Pirānmalaigaḷ Ammāy

(Mother, the Virali Hills, Sōlai Hills, Swāmi malai—all these we dowered with pleasure to Vaḷḷi of our resplendent tribe. Pirānmalai, Chirāmalai and other hills belong to the Lord who has adorned his head with the crescent moon).

When we critically examine the three kuṛavañchi-poems cited above, we notice that though they have the same thoughts the style their prosody differs—becoming more and more simple at later ages. As the style is simple every one can read and enjoy the poems.

Paḷḷupprabandam: These poems describe the tillers who are called Paḷḷas and hence gets this name. The day to day life of the tillers are described in simple language in these types of poems. It is gathered that in all, there are 23 Paḷḷu works like Mukkūḍal Paḷḷu, Tiruvāmur Paḷḷu, Kuṛugūrpaḷḷu, Tirumalai Murugan Paḷḷu, Vysyappaḷḷu etc. Some of these have not been published in book form. Research scholars hold that of all Paḷḷu works Mukkuḍal Paḷḷu is the earliest work. All Paḷḷas gather to pray to God for rains. Then noticing in the sky, signs of impending rain they joyfully dance and sing and the song on such an occasion can be read with pleasure :

ஆற்று வெள்ளம் நாளைவரத்
Aṛṛu Veḷḷam Nāḷai varat

தோற்றுதே குறி—மலை
Toṛṛutāy Kuṛi—Malai

யாளமின்னல் ஈழமின்னல்
Yaḷa Minnal Ēḻa Minnal

சூழ மின்னுதே
Sūḻa Minnuthay

நேற்றும் இன்றும் கொம்பு சுற்றிக்
Neṛṛum Inṛum Kombu cuṛṛik

காற்றடிக்குதே—கேணி
Kaṛṛaḍikuthay—Kēṇi

நீர்ப்படு சொறித்தவளை
Neerppaḍu Coṛittavaḷai

கூப்பிடு குதே
Kūppiḍu kuthay

சேற்று நண்டு சேற்றில் வளை
Çeṛṛu Nanḍu Ceṛṛil Valai

ஏற்றடிக்குதே—மழை
Erradikkuthay—Malai

தேடி யொரு கோடிவானம்
Tēdi yoru Kōdivānam

பாடி யாடுதே
Pādi Yāduthēy

போற்றி திரு மாலழகர்க்
Porri Tiru Mālalagark

கேற்றமாம் பண்ணைச் சேரிப்
Kerramam Pannaic—Cerip

புள்ளிப் பள்ளர் ஆடிப்பாடி
Pulli Pallar Adipppadi

துள்ளிக் கொள்வோமே
Tullik Kolvomāy

(There is sign of a flood in the river tomorrow. The lightning is on the hills and Ēlam. The winds are whirling strongly since yesterday and today; the striped frog in the well is chattering. The crabs in the slush are blocking the water lift. The west sky is seeking the rains. Hail, Tirumal of the Pannai. We the Pallars of the Chēri land-lord shall dance, spring and sing).

Periyavan Kavirāyar who sang the Tirumalai Murugan Pallu has under the heading "signs of rain" sung with the same tune as in the Mukkudapallu. Let us examine it.

கொங்குமின்னல் ஈழமின்னல்
Kongu Minnal Ēla Minnal

எங்கும் மின்னுது—கருங்
Engum Minnutu—Karun

குயிலொளிக்க மஞ்சள் நிற
Kuyilolikka Mañjal nira

வெயிலெறிக்குது
Veyilerikkudu

கங்கண் திரண் டேயொலிக்கு
Kankan tiran dēyolikku

தங்கண் விசும்பில—வரக்
Tangaṇ visumbil—Varak

கண்டோம் வெள்ளைப் பூச்சியும்
Kaṇdōm Vellaip Pūchiyum

கும்பிடுநாச்சியும்
Kumbiḍu Nāchiyum

மங்களமாய்த் திங்கள்தோறும்
Maṅgaḷamāit tiṅgaḷ toṛum

எங்கும்மும் மாரிபெய்ய
Engum mummāri—Peyya

வட்டமாக மொட்டைச் சித்தா
Vaṭṭamāga Moṭṭaic Citta

வெட்டுது புல்லை
Vettutu Pullai

எங்கள் திருமலைக் கந்தர்
Eṅgāḷ Tirumalaik Kandar

பொங்கருளினால்—பொய்யா
Poṅgarulināl—Poyyā

தின்று நாளைப் பெய்யும் மழை
Tinṛu Nālaip Peyyum Maḻai

நன்று பள்ளரே
Nanṛu Paḷḷaray.

(The lightning of Koṅgu and Ēzham is everywhere. The yellow sunshine makes the dark kuyil shine. The eagles gather in the skies and cry; the white moths appear. The *chitta* is cutting the grass in circles for the rain to fall auspiciously thrice a month; by the Grace of the Kanda of our beautiful Hill, it will surely rain today and ṭomorrow).

This song of Paḷḷars touches our heart and creates a new feeling in us.

The Dēsiṅgu Rājan legend: Next we shall examine Ballads with historical background. Many read with pleasure the legend of Rāja Dēsiṅg. He ruled Giñgee in South Ārcot district. Dēsiṅg

was ready for a war with Ārcot Nawab Syedullah when the latter invaded his kingdom and sent word for his friend Magappatkhān. (Mugappatkhān) At the time Magappat Khān was getting married. When Magappat Khān was about to tie the *Tāli* he received news of the war. He immediately left the *Tāli* untied, in the plate and proceeded to the battlefield. At this his mother wept and attempted to prevent his going. Magappat Khān consoled his mother and left for the battle. The words spoken by him on that occasion proclaim his heroism.

அம்மா கேளும் அம்மா கேளும் என்னைப் பெற்ற தாயே
Ammā Kēlum Amma Kēlum Ennai peṟṟa Tāye

உன்தன் வயிற்றில் பிள்ளை பிறந்து ஊதாரியா போவேனோ
Untan Vayiṟṟil Piḷḷai pirandu Ūdāriyā Pōvēno

இரணகளத்தில் செத்துப்போனால் நல்ல பதவியுண்டு
Eraṇa Kalatil Çettupōnāl Nalla Padavl Uṇḍu

கத்திமுனையில் சாவேனானால் ஜல்தி மோக்ஷமுண்டு
Katti Munayil çavēṉānāl Jalti Mōkshamuṇḍu

குண்டு முகத்தில் சாவேனானால் கோடி லாபமுண்டு
Gunḍu Mugatil çavēnānāl Kōḍi Lābamuṇḍu

மருந்து முகத்தில் சாவேனானால் மகாபதவியுண்டு
Marundu Mugatil çavēnānāl Makā Padaviyuṇḍu

சண்டை கெலித்து வந்தேனே யானால் தாலிகட்டுகிறேன்
Canḍai Gelittu Vandēnēyānāl Tāli Kattugirāne

மாண்டு மடிந்து போவேனேயானால் மனதுமலங்காதே
Manḍu Maḍinthu Pōvēnēyānāl Manadu Kalaṅgāthay

போய்வருகிறேன் போய்வருகிறேன் புண்யவதி தாயே
Pōl Varugiṟāne Pōi Varugiṟāne Puṇyavatl Tāyē

அந்தப் பேச்சு காதிலே கேட்டு அலறிவிழுந்தாளாம்
Andap Pēchu Kadilē Kēttu Alaṟi Viḻundāḷām

கங்கணக்கையை பார்த்துப் பார்த்து கதறி அழுதாளாம்
Kaṅgaṇakkayal Pārthup Pārthu Kadaṟi Aḻudālām

மஞ்சள் உடுப்பைப் பார்த்துப் பார்த்துமயங்கி அழுதாளாம்
Mañjal Uḍuppaip Pārthup Pārthu Mayaṅgl Aḻudāḷam

8179

கல்யாணப் பெண்ணைக் கண்டு மெலிந்து கலங்கி அழுதாளாம்
Kalyāṇap Peṇṇaik Kaṇḍu Melindu Kalaṅgi Aḻudāḷām

("Listen, mother who begot me. Born of you, will I ever become wayward? If I die in a bloodbath I will get an honoured status. If I die at the point of a sword I will reach heaven quickly. If I die thorough a bullet I gain crores of virtue. If I die by gunpowder I reach the highest status. If I return victorious I will tie the *Ṭāli* (*Maṅgalyam*). If I fall and die, do not lament, Virtuous mother! Let me go; let me go!" Hearing these words she shrieked and fell. Seeing his wedding wrist-band she sobbed aloud. Seeing his saffron (wedding) robes she wept and swooned. Looking at the bride she became weak with weeping.)

In these lines, note the heroism and pathos. In this work, we find a number of alliterations and repetitions.

திமிதிமி திமிதிமி திமிதிமி என்று சேனை நடந்திடவே
Thimi Thimi Thimi Thimi Thimi Thimi Enṟu Sēnai
[Naḍantiḍavē

கணகண கணகண கணகண என்று கத்திகள் மின்னுது பார்
Gaṇa Gaṇa Gaṇa Gaṇa Gaṇa Gaṇa Enṟu Kattigaḷ
[Minnuthupār

தடதட தடதட தடதட என்று தமுறுமுழங்குதுபார்
Daḍa Daḍa Daḍa Daḍa Daḍa Daḍa Enṟu Tamuṟu
[Muḻangudhu Pār

இன்றைக்கும் சாவு நாளைக்கும் சாவு இருக்குது தலைமேலே
Inṟaikkum çāvu nālaikkum çāvu irukkutu talaimēlāy

பிள்ளைப் பிறந்தால் சண்டை முகத்தில் பேரெடுக்கவேணும்
Piḷḷaip piṟandāl çaṇḍai mugathil pēreḍukkavēṇum

அண்ணா வாடா தம்பி வாடா மோவுத்துக்காரா நீ
Aṇṇa vāḍa tambi vāḍa Mōvuthukārād nee

லகானை இழுத்துச் சிமிட்டாக் கொடுத்தான் ராஜாதேசிங்கு
Lagānai iḻuthu çimittāk koḍuthān Rājā Dēsiṅgu

We can never forget these lines, spelling heroism.

Rāmappaiyan Ammāṇai: Rāmappayyan Ammāṇai is a work describing the victorious exploits of Rāmappayyan, the commander

of the forces of Tirumalai Nāicken who ruled in Madurai in the 17th century. Thiru S. Vaiyāpuri Piḷḷai has brought this out as a publication of the Madras University. Rāmappayyan under the orders of Tirumalai Nāicken proceeded to crush Saḍaikkaṉ Thēvan II who ruled Sēthu Nādu (Rāmanāthapuram). The swearing words used by Saḍaikkan on hearing of the invasion of Ramappayyan are worthy of being read with pleasure:

"I will pluck the eyes of Rāmappayyan who has come to invade my land and cast it in the forest. My name is not Saḍaikkaṉ if I do not break to pieces, a coconut on the tuft of his head. If I fail to do this I shall not touch my arms." These are the actual words of Saḍaikkan, the commander of the Sētupati (of Rāmanāthapuram).

என்னை மெலிவிக்க எவனால்முடியுமடா
Who can weaken me

எண்ணாமல் வந்து இறங்குமந்த இராமய்யனை
Ramayyan who has come without thinking

கண்ணைப்பிடுங்கிக் காட்டிலே போடாட்டால்
If his eyes are not plucked and cast in the forest

என் பெயர்தான் சடைக்கண் எடுத்ததுவும் ஆயுதமோ
Shall my name be Sadaikkaṉ and bear arms

பின்குடுமிதன்னில் பேருலகுதானறியத்
For all the world to know, at tuft at the back of his head

தேங்காயைக் கட்டிச் சிதற அடிபாட்டால்
If a coconut is not broken to pieces

என்பேர் சடைக்கண் எடுத்ததுவும் ஆயுதமோ
shall my name be Sadaikkaṉ and I bear arms.

(Rāmappayyan Ammānai, line 339–345).

The colloquialism in these lines attract us.

Alli Arasāṇi Mālai: In Ballads relating to *Puranic* stories scenes of various kinds have been depicted. The famine in Madurai city is vividly described in *Alli Arasāṇi Mālai*, the authorship of which is attributed to poet Pugazhēndi. A *Pūjāri* (priest) was singing this in proper tune.

பாண்டிய நாட்டார்தாம் பரதேசம் போகிறுர்கள்
The people of Pāndyanād are going to outside countries

மழைகள் கிடையாது மதுரை நகர்ச்சீமையிலே
There are no rains in Madurai land

தூறல் கிடையாது தென்மதுரை பூமியிலே
There are no showers in South Madurai territory

தூறல் விழுவதில்லை சொக்கர் மதுரையிலே
There are no rain drops in Śokkar's Madurai

காய்ந்துலர்ந்து போயினவே கனமதுரைப் பட்டணத்தில்
Faded and dried are things in prosperous Madurai City

எரிந்து புகைகிறதே ஈரம் கிடையாமல்
Things smoke and burn due to lack of moisture

குடிக்க நீர்கிட்டாது குளங்கள் மடுக்களெல்லாம்
There is no drinking water in tanks and ponds

காகம் குடிப்பதற்குக் கரண்டி ஜலம் கிட்டாது
There is not a spoon of water for the crow to drink

ஆறுகள் குளங்களெல்லாம் அடங்கலும் வறண்டனவே
Rivers and tanks have all dried up

ஏரிகள்வறண்டனவே ஏற்றக்கோல் ஆழமட்டும்
Lakes have dried up to the depth of the water life

விளைவுகள் கிடையாது வேந்தன் மதுரையிலே
There is no produce in Madurai King's domain

The alliteration and rhyme in these lines are pleasing to read.

Lullaby songs: We see among Ballad songs lullabies sung by our matrons. We can see even uneducated mothers singing lullabies composed out of love for their childern, with beautiful arrangements of words. A mother in Pāṇḍya country hung a cradle for her child. She imagines that it is hung with chains of gold and silver and made of *Ilupya* (*Bassia Longifolia*) wood.

வெள்ளிவளைபூட்டி விலாசமாய்த் தொட்டி கட்டி
Veḷḷivaḷai pooṭṭi, vilāsamāit toṭṭi kaṭṭi

தங்கவளைபூட்டி சதுரஅலங்காய் தொட்டிகட்டி
Taṅgavaḷai pooṭṭi chathura alaṅgāi toṭṭi kaṭṭi

பச்சை இலுப்பை வெட்டி பால்வடியத் தொட்டிகட்டி
Pachai Iluppai veṭṭi pāl vaḍiyat toṭṭi kaṭṭi

தொட்டியிலே அட்டணக்கால், தூங்கறது ஆருமகன்
Toṭṭiyilay aṭṭaṇakkal, toongaṛatu āru magan

சீதை மகனோ ஸ்ரீராமர் தந்த கண்ணோ
Seetai maganō, Sree Rāmar tanda kaṇṇō

அல்லிமகனோ அரிராமர் மரு மகனோ
Alli maganō, Ari Rāmar maru maganō

(with silver rings hanging a broad cradle, with gold rings hanging a square cradle, with freshly cut *Iluppai* wood having cradle with milk streaking, while oscillating the cradle, whose son is sleeping; Is he Seeta's son darling born to Sree Rāma; Is he Alli's son or nephew of Hari Rāma.)

In such words a mother happily sings a lullaby.

Siddar's poems: Among Ballads there are some which teach us spirituality. The songs sung by mendicants teach us high philosophy.

நந்தவனத்தில் ஓர் ஆண்டி—அவன்
In the garden an anchorite—He

நாலாறு மாதமாய்க் குயவனை வேண்டி
prayed for four and six months of the potter

கொண்டுவந்தானொரு தோண்டி—அதைக்
And got a pot—That

கூத்தாடிக் கூத்தாடிப் போட்டுடைத் தாண்டி
He smashed after dancing and dancing.

In this garden of the world we are born to cultivate good flower sprouts and worship God. The pot is intended to for use in watering the plots. In the poem the pot refers to our body which will perish one day or other. Before that we should think of God, pray to him and attain the purpose of this birth. That is what the poem signifies. The same idea is found in the மெய்ஞ்ஞானப் புலம்பல் (Lamentation for True wisdom) otherwise called எக்காலக் கண்ணி by St. Bhadragiri.

உப்பிட்ட பாண்டமது உடைந்துகருக் கொள்ளுமுன்னே
This salted pot before it breaks and assumes another embryo
அப்பிட்ட வேணியனுக்கு ஆட்படுவ தெக்காலம் ?
When will it become devoted to the Lord with water ?

The salted pot will break at any time. Our body is like that Before it perishes it has to seek salvation and attain the Lord (Śiva) who has (River) Gaṅga on his hair tress. That is the idea preached by the above couplet.

We should cherish the Ballads which are replete with beautiful literary values and ideas and which reveal Tamilian culture. There are a uumber of ballads in various district of Tamiḻ Nāḍu which are sung orally by tradition and have not been brought out. If we could compile all these and publish them it will be the greatest service we could render to Tamiḻ. Long live Ballads and our literature !

Thiru C. M. Janarthanam : Will you please enlighten us, whether there is any reference in the Tamiḻ Ballads, just explained to us to any social conflicts or tensions like the struggle of the peasantry against feudal landlords or the artisans and craftsmen against the traders and mercantile classes or the kings and *pālayakkārs* as the people and so forth?

Thiru M. Arunachalam : Though the travails of the poor and the lowly are depicted, there is no information of the kind of social struggles and tensions are raised by the queriest. Most of the poems or ballads depict the strivings of the people towards a higher type of ethical and good life.

Thiru C. M. Janarthanam : You have spoken of the ballads on '*Mathurai Veeran*' '*Kāthavarāyan Kathai*', '*Saṅgili Kathai*' etc. depicting the criminal exploits of the 'heroes' and state that they represent the personification of the evil. May I ask you, whether these 'Heroes' do not at some point or other give expression to really heroic qualities like pity or valour or human sympathy or egalitarianism like Robin Hood or Santhana Tēvan? How do you explain for the popularity of these songs?

Thiru M. Arunachalam: So far I could see, there is absolutely no evidence of any good qualities about these people. I find only evidence of scoundaralism, rape, robbery etc. It really baffles my understanding. Probably, the common people have a sub-conscious admiration for these unethical tendencies.

The Chairman thanked the Leader of the Seminar and the participants for the intesting points made on such a popular and vast subject.

REPORTS OF SEMINARS

II

The Institute of Traditional Cultures held a seminar at 4 P.M. on Friday the 10th January 1975 in Room No. 48 of the Madras University Departmental Buildings on "RENEWAL AND PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONS IN DANCE" led by Selvi Padma Subrahmanyam, M.A. The following is a report of the proceedings of the Seminar.

Present :

Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D.Phil (Oxon) in the Chair.

Selvi Padma Subrahmanyam, M.A., Leader.

An audience of 69 persons was present.

The Chairman introduced the Leader as an outstanding exponent of Indian Dance and requested her to lead the seminar.

Padma Subrahmanyam: The topic of to-day's talk is "The Renewal and Preservation of Dance Traditions". Obviously, there are two parts, viz., "Renewal of Traditions" which are lost and "Preservation of whatever traditions" that exist to-day. Before that, let us find out what 'tradition' really means. Tradition is some constant idea or habit or custom handed over from generation to generation. It may not be written down. Just as these traditions are constantly changing in any aspect of our life, dance art in India has had a continuous tradition; but this tradition also has been changing from century to century. So, it is really not correct to say that we have retained the pristine purity of our dance traditions for the past 2000 years. The earliest extant literature on dramaturgy is Bharata's *Nāṭya Sāstra*. This is a voluminous work which runs to 36 chapters. It reflects the tradition which existed from Pre-Bharata period. Bharata is said to have lived nearly 2000 years ago. Let us not go into the controversy of the date of this sage. But Bharata's work itself is said to represent an older tradition. The concepts found in Bharata's work are all

not coined by Bharata. It is not as if he invented them, but he only investigated and recorded the older and contemporaneous tradition. We find from literary evidence that there were works written on dance even before Bharata's time. Two Naṭa Sūtrakārās are mentioned in Pāṇini's grammar. They were Śilālin and Krśāśwa. But we do not have even the traces of these earlier works any more. But we can be sure that Bharata's work itself has incorporated at least a part of the contents of their earlier works. *Nāṭya Sāstra* is believed to be a work of composite authorship as evidenced by the variations in the style of the language found in it. Verses of unknown authorship which are traditionally handed down from father to son are called '*Anuvamśya*' verses. Such verses are found in Bharata's *Nāṭya Sāstra.* So actually the *Nāṭya Sāstra* consists of Sūtra, Bhāshya, Kārika etc. Some parts are even prose. It is actually a compilation of works of many great authorities who wrote in one pen name, viz, Bharata. When we try to connect this tradition found in Bharata's work with the contemporary tradition, we realise that we do not have them in full, in any one style of dance or drama of any one particular region. But reminiscences of that older tradition seems to be scattered in all our classical and folk and dramas all over India and also in the neighbouring countries like Ceylon and Indonesia.

'Bharata Nāṭya' as we see to-day is explained as that Nāṭya which is a combination of Bhāva, Rāga and Tāḷa. It is a beautiful and fanciful poetic explanation which has come down to us from the time of Vedānta Dēśika for the term Bharata. But if we scrutinise this statement, it does not really define Bharata Nāṭyam. If we are to take that a mere combination of Bhāva, Rāga and Tāḷa alone is Bharatanāṭyam, any dance, whether western classical ballet or Indian *Therukoothu* (street drama) could be termed as Bharata natyam. There is definitely Bhāva, Rāga and Tāḷa in these dances. Bharata nāṭyam should be taken to mean as that Nāṭya which follows Bharata's work. The classical dance which is called Bharata nāṭyam to-day, was only called "*Sadhir*" till a few decades ago. If I am not mistaken, it was the contribution of the late Sri E. Krishna Iyer and Smt. Rukmini Devi. They changed the name of '*Sadhir*' as Bharata nāṭyam with the good

intention of raising the social status of this art. The credit of having associated the name of Bharata with *Sadhir* goes to these great stalwarts. But unfortunately it has had some side effects also, in the sense that we started believing that this is the earliest of the prevailing dance styles. It created confusion regarding the antiquity of this dance form. This '*sadhir*' or what you call as 'Bharata nāṭyam' to-day has been in vogue only for about 150 years. The tradition which existed before that was different. I am not sure that even 200 years back Bharata's tradition was still alive because Bharata's work is about 2000 years old, We have also had later authorities to record further developments in the art. So tradition has continuously been flowing and we should be happy that there has not been any stagnation in the process of creativity in dance. Whatever was recorded by Bharata is referred to by later authorities under the name of "Mārgi". Just as we have Mārgi and Dēśi in music, later developments in dance were also recorded in the name of Dēśi. So we have Dēśi karaṇas, Dēśi sthānas and so on. But we should be happy that creativity was never curbed. It was not only encouraged but also recorded by different authorities like Śārngadēva, Jāyappa and Nandikēśwara. I believe that Nandikēśwara who wrote "*Abhinaya Dharpana*" and Nandikēśwara who wrote "*Bharatārṇava*" were two different authors. They belonged to two different periods also. Now let us not go into that controversy. Whatever it is, we should be happy that all later developments were also recorded as part of tradition. If we really want to renew the tradition of Bharata's time and make contemporary classical dance deserve the name 'Bharatanāṭyam', it is not only enough to study the concerned literature, but the products of such a study must be incorporated into our choreography. Any amount of writing or studying would not be of much help to the artistes if they are of no practical use. So, it is our duty to reconstruct the older tradition. The tradition which is seen in Bharata's work, particularly with regard to dance, has been practically out of vogue for nearly 400 years. I am not blaming our artistes or teachers for this. This is bound to happen. We are not speaking Shakespearean English or Śaṅgam Tamil to-day. In the same way, we do not perform Bharata's

nāṭyam to-day. We have to understand what Bharata's nātyam is. Bharata called his work '*Nāṭya Śāstra*' and not 'Nṛtta Śāstra'. It is not the Śāstra which is meant only for dance. But it is the Śāstra for drama or theatre as a whole. Nāṭya of Bharata's age was a composite whole which had speech, music and dance as its elements. In fact it deals with poetics too. The last 8 chapters are all on music. Nāṭya Śāstra certainly deals with dance also. Still, the Nāṭya that we see in Bharata's age is something which is not very different from dance. Nāṭya and Nṛtta were not considered different from each other. Abhinavagupta, in his commentary on *Nāṭya Śāstra*, states categorically that for all practical purposes, Nṛtta is not different from Nāṭya. Now we have to see the relationship between Nāṭya and Nṛtta. We should note that Nāṭya and Nṛtta are same and yet are two different arts. Nṛtta was part of Nāṭya. Nṛtta is dance which is non-representational. Nāṭya is drama; a combination of both these is Nṛtya which is dance of representational nature. In Bharata's work, we come across only Nāṭya and Nṛtta while Nṛtya is not mentioned. Nṛtya is defined by later authorities. According to Bharata's work, Nṛtya was part of Nāṭya. The actor was supposed to dance and also sing; his talent was much more demanding than to-day. For example if we take the case of Śakuntala watering the plants or a scene where the bee harasses her, the scene was actually danced with gestures. The artist portraying Śakuntala perhaps used Bhramari hasta to show the bee. Of course, there was no toy bee, tied to a string and hung to be swinging around the stage. The artiste whirled round with Bhramari hasta and danced these scenes.

Nṛtta was performed at the very beginning of Nāṭya in the Pūrva raṅga, i.e. preliminary. Pūrva raṅga was called "Śuddha" when it was in the form of "ritual or yagña". It was called 'Citra' when it was performed as dance. We are able to understand that in Bharata's time they knew the value of physical movements. It is clear that its effect is equal to that of yagña. Nṛtta was the first part of Nāṭya. Moreover, whenever Śriṅgāra rasa dominated, Nṛtta was freely used. Actually there was no special occasion needed for Nṛtta. It was considered auspicious

and included wherever it was possible. In fact, fighting sequences were all performed as dance. The reminiscence of such mock fights is seen in the contemporary (Kathakali) classical theatre and (Therukoothu) folk theatre of India and also in the Indonesian version of *Rāmāyaṇa*. Thus we can understand that an actor was supposed to learn as much dance as a dancer would do. The cāris or leg movements were to be mastered by the actor as well as the dancer. Cāris are the various kinds of gaits and leg movements specified according to the roles to be depicted. So, these gaits were to be learnt by both the dancer and the actor, If such a mastery over dance was expected out of the actor, we can very well imagine the standard that was expected of a dancer.

In Nāṭya, the cāri is performed by the actor to bring out the characteristic gait of various roles and also in fighting sequences. The hand gestures are not involved for such situations. Many cāris are combined to depict combats. Such combinations of cāris are termed as Maṇḍala. Maṇḍala is meant for the actors in Nāṭya. The counterpart of Maṇḍala was the Aṅgahāra for the dancer in Nṛtta. Aṅgahāra was a combination of different movements which included hand gestures. Aṅgahāra itself is a combination of karaṇas. A karaṇa is a combination of a cāri, Nṛtta hasta and sthāna. About eight to ten karaṇas make an aṅgahāra. We can see its counterpart in the korvais and Jatis of to-day. What is a Jati after all? It is a combination of various Aḍavus and what is an Aḍavu? Aḍavu is a unit of dance. It is a combination of movement of feet, hand gesture and sthāna or posture for the body which is like kneeling, standing etc. All these form part of the contemporary unit of dance called Aḍavu. The Sanskrit terminology of this very term Aḍavu is karaṇa; Karaṇas are the Aḍavus of Bharata's age. Karaṇa has its root of 'Kṛ' meaning action. It is obvious that Karaṇa is a movement and not a static pose. I am stressing this point because karaṇa is normally mistaken to be a static pose. It has often been translated even by great scholars as pose, because of the confusion caused by static sculptures representing karaṇas in temples like Cnidambaram, Tañjāvūr, Kumbakonam etc. I myself mistook them to be static poses and copied the sculptures and used them in my own choreography nearly ten

years ago in my dance drama, "Meenakshi Kalyanam". But now, I know that what I did was wrong. I am sorry for this harm done to the field because it has influenced many artistes. Karaṇas are not mere gestures nor mere poses, but they are movements like Aḍavus. Karaṇas are the older Aḍavus which are not used to-day. The southern terminology for karaṇa is Aḍavu.

The Karaṇas that we perform to-day in the name of Aḍavu are only less than two hundred years old. Karaṇas of Bharata's time are 108 in number and are enumerated in the IVth Chapter of *Nāṭya Śāstra.* The IVth Chapter is a very important chapter from the point of view of dance for it forms the foundation of Nṛtta of that age. Apart from the 108 karaṇas, the IVth Chapter also describes the 32 aṅgahāras. Recently, I heard describing the karaṇas as "flying movements performed by the celestials 2000 years ago when there was not much gravity on earth". With all humility, I beg to differ from such statements. I do not know whether the celestials lived 2000 years ago. The karaṇas were not just floating movements. Karaṇas have cāris or movements of legs. Cāris are classified as Bhū cāris and Ākāśa cāris. Bhū cāris are movements of legs with the feet close to the ground. Ākāśa cāris are not movements floating in the air, but they are movements where the feet are alternatively lifted from the ground. There are sixteen Bhū cāris and sixteen Ākāśa cāris and one has to master these thirty two cāris in order to understand the karaṇas.

We have two concepts imbibed in a karaṇa. They are Sthithi, the static element and Gati, the dynamic element. The sthāna in which you perform the particular movement represents the static element and the actual cāri with Nṛtta hasta represents the dynamic element. For example, while the balance of the entire body is maintained without movement, the feet alone may produce some fast steps. Here you have both the static and dynamic elements combined. The six basic sthānas are Samā, Maṇḍala, Vaishnava, Vaiśākha, Aleeḍha and Pratyāleeḍha. The sthānas are the basic poses in many of the dance styles of India even to-day. But each style has taken one of these sthānas and developed on that.

Sadhir is totally based on Maṇḍala Sthānas. In Kathak, the main pose is Sama sthana. But the Vaiśākha and Vaishnava Sthānas are seen mainly in Kathakali. In Kathakali they use Parshni pāda which is also mentioned in our ancient texts. In this, the soles are made to face each other and the dancer walks on one part of the feet. So it is not as if it has suddenly sprung up from somewhere and that it is meant for one region. The Bhramari or whirling movements are of many kinds and they are not meant for the kathak dancers alone. These Bhramaris are scattered in every style of dance.

There have been many interesting comments on my dance due to the inclusion of various karaṇas. Some years back, when I performed karaṇas like katicchinna which involved the movement of the waist, there was a comment that I was copying Odissi dance movements. Honestly, I had never seen Odissi dance till then. When I performed the karaṇa, 'Gajakrīditam', it was dubbed as Kathakali. I was actually following Nāṭya Śāstra and had never learnt Kathakali. Many Bhramaris which I perform resemble Kathak. Some of these whirling movements are used by Kathak dancers of to-day. I remember that there was a comment that one of my movements resembles even Cabaret; that movement is called 'Badda cari' in which the 'Ūru' or thigh is turned in and out while walking. It is used in the karaṇa called 'Valitōrukam'. Only a part of these movements are seen in the sculptures. If one keeps on standing in one posture, copying the sculpture, it would not be a karaṇa. There is so much to precede and so much to follow. So, a mere mixture of some Aḍavus with some poses cannot become karaṇas. These movements are seen scattered in all the various styles of Indian dance. They may or may not be in their original shape. But their traces could be seen in spite of the changes. Some of the karaṇas of Bharata are seen even beyond the shores of India. For example, a karaṇa called 'Mayūra Lalita' is seen in the Indonesian dance under the name of "Mayuret". One difference is that while the Nāṭya Śāstra specifies the Kuñçita foot, the Indonesian Mayuret has Añçita foot. Mayūralalita karaṇa is defined as that movement in which the leg is lifted as Vṛsçika, the hands are spread as rēcita

and the sacrum is twisted. Just as a scorpion lifts its tail up, the leg is raised up—this is Vrisçikapādam.

Unless one follows Abhinava Gupta's commentary, it is not easy to understand *Nāṭya S'āstra* and reconstruct the movements. It is also true that just as Aḍiyārkkunallār's commentary is much more difficult to grasp than *Silappatikāram*, it is very difficult to go through Abhinava's commentary and assimilate the contents. But if one has the patience to do so, the result is certainly rewarding. Abhinava's work gives indication of even subtle yet vital points of practical importance.

Sometimes two parts of the same karaṇa is depicted in two different temples, Mayūralalitam itself is seen in different parts depicted in the temples of Tañjāvūr and Chidambaram. A karaṇa called Mattai is still seen with some variance in the Kuchipuḍi style. The feet alternately encircle each other and in this process they become Kuñçita of the ground. The sole has to be arched for Kuñçita. The difference between Sūci pāda and Kuñçitapāda is that Suci has just its big toe touching the ground. Kuñçita has the upper part of its toes on the ground while the sole is arched. We do not use this feet variation any more in our contemporary dance. We have been hearing references to the Kuñçitapāda of Lord Naṭarāja. It is not because the leg is lifted this name has been derived; but it is because the sole is arched even in the lifted posture, that it is called Kuñçitapāda. This is seen in the Ānanda tāṇḍava figures of the beautiful Chola Icons. Most of the later idols do not have the Kuñçitapāda depicted perfectly. In Kuchipuḍi style, they still use this Kuñçitapāda in Mattali; but not with the feet turned on sides as Pārśwa. It is probably because Kuchipuḍi was handled by men whose limbs are not as nimble as those of women. So, this cross-legged movement is seen in a little simplified manner. The rhombus between the legs has also been lost.

Maṇipuri dance which is believed to be one of the youngest of the classical dances also seems to have been based on *Nāṭya S'āśtra*, particularly with regard to the hand movements called

Nṛtta hastas. Nṛtta hastas and the Hasta karaṇas of *Nāṭya Śāstra* are still seen mainly in Maṇipuri style only. Hasta karaṇas are movements of the hands. There are various ways of rotating the hands from the wrist. They are Vyāvartita, Parivartita, Udvēshṭita and Apavēshṭita. These four karaṇas are the basis for the entire Maṇipuri hand movements. They form the basis of the Nṛtta hastas also. Nṛtta hastas are different from the usual Abhinaya hastas which many are familiar with. Abhinaya hastas are used for communication. The Nṛtta hastas mentioned in "*Abhinaya dharpana*" are different from those of *Nāṭya Śāstra.* Unless we follow the *Nāṭya Śāstra* directly, we will not be able to understand Bharata's karaṇas. Maṇipuri technique is based on Nṛtta hastas. The hand movements mentioned may not synchronise with the feet movements in Maṇipuri. The feet movements may be over but the hand movements may continue. Sometimes there are karaṇas in *Nāṭya Śāstra* which have the Nṛtta hastas as their main feature. The difference between Abhinaya hasta and Nṛtta hasta is that Abhinaya hasta is more static in the sense that the meaning depends on where and how we use them but in Nṛtta hasta, there is a specific course to follow for the hand movements. The hand movement which Sri Uday Shanker popularised is called '*Aviddha Vakra*' in which there is simultaneous movement of the shoulders, elbows, wrists and fingers in a serpentine way. It is one of the Nṛtta hastas. Some dance teachers do not think that it is classical. This opinion is erroneous. It is mentioned even in "*Saṅgīta Ratnākara*". The author Sārṅgadēva says that if you are not careful while using this movement particularly in the faster tempo, the hands may be even crooked to look at. The contents of Bharata's dance is much scattered all over India and even abroad. In order to renew these lost traditions, it is necessary to weave this scattered material, study them and practise them.

The next part of this lecture is of course, the preservation of whatever we still have with us. Contemporary dance tradition of Tamilnāḍu is said to have come down to us from the time of the Tañjāvūr quarteret. It looks as though the more complicated leg

movements were lost and replaced by mere foot work. These brothers simplified them and systematised them. Probably these brothers were anxious that it should be popularly learnt by many, so that we are concentrating more on foot work than movements of the entire legs. This tradition has come down to us in the modern period, say from around the time of the Mahrattas of Tañjāvūr. The present repertoire consisting of Alarippu, Jathiswaram, Sabdham, Varṇam etc. is about 150 years old. The items which were in vogue earlier, are lost. There is nothing wrong about it because it is bound to happen. It is inevitable that in due course of time even these alārippus etc., will fade away and be replaced by some other new numbers. This has happened earlier and will happen in future. But what is essential is to record for purposes of history, the contemporary tradition just as the medieval authorities did. The basis for the contemporary Aḍavu technique is a work called '*Saṅgita Sārāmrita*' written by King Thulaja. It is also a fact that some Aḍavus mentioned in this late work are not in use to-day. One of the Maṇdi Aḍavus which is lost, is 'Mṛdu Sparshaṇa Aḍavu'. This Aḍavu is already lost. It is necessary to form a system of notation in order to record the Aḍavus as well as the various traditional choreographic forms of the modern period. Since the present technique is depending mainly on the foot work, the following system of notation may be useful. I have tried to reduce at least the foot work of the Aḍavus into an easy system of notation, just to aid memory. The movements of the hands will have to be only described. I was inspired by the staff notation of the Western music and I have adopted some of the principles to suit the need here. By this we notate the foot work on horizontal lines through symbols which indicate the right and left foot respectively. The vertical lines form the bars which measure the rhythm according to the angas of the specified tala. The following are the principles on which the notation is based.

1. The lines denote the type of feet variations.

2. The name of the kind of feet variation is written on the left side of the line each time as in illustration 1.

ILLUSTRATION 1

TAṬṬU____________________

MEṬṬU____________________

KUṬṬU__________

NĀṬṬU

3. The number of lines depend on the number of kinds of feet variations which occur in the Aḍavu to be notated.
4. The names and number of lines obviously change according to the needs of the Aḍavu.
5. The right and left foot are denoted by the symbols as in illustration 2 below.

ILLUSTRATION 2

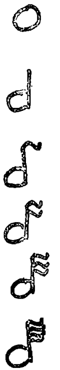
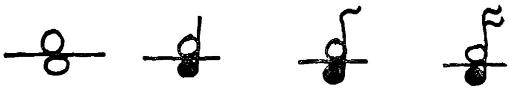
Right foot	*Name of the symbol*	*Left foot*
	MINIM CROTCHET QUAVER SEMI QUAVER DEMI SEMI QUAVER HEMI DEVI SEMI QUAVER	

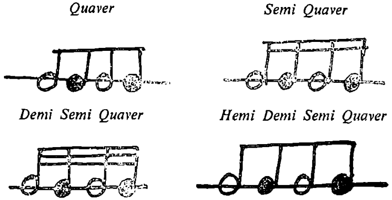
ILLUSTRATION 3



Symbols such as in illustration 3 on p. 217 above denote the work of both the feet at a time at various speeds. Thus, the kind of feet variation is denoted by the lines on which the symbols occur and specify which foot is to perform it.

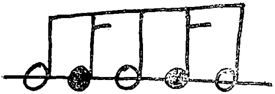
6. When there are more than one quaver in a bar they can be tried as in illustration 4.

ILLUSTRATION 4



When quavers and semi quavers occur alternatively, it would be as in illustration 5.

ILLUSTRATION 5



The same is possible with Hemi Semi quavers and Hemi Demi Semi quavers.

7. The time measure is marked by the bars on the vertical lines which occur. A double line or a double bar means the completion of one whole āvarta of the respective tāla. For example, Ādi Tāla has eight beats. But the bars will be only according to its aṅgas as written usually for Indian music notation. Thus in Ādi Tāla the bars will be after laghu, after drutam and a double bar after the second drutam, thus completing the āvarta. The Ādi Tāla itself could be made of two, four, eight, sixteen a thirty-two aksharas in each āvarta. When symbols of Minim are used, it would mean long beats in a bar. The time measure of the āvarta

would then be 8/4 i.e. eight such long beats in a four kaḷa āvarta. When symbols of Crotchets are used, it would mean eight shorter beats in āvarta. In other words, the value of two Crotchets is equal to a Minim. This can be written as 8/2 and hence it is for two kaḷa āvarta.

Half of the time value of a Crotchet is a Quaver (8/1). Half of a Quaver is a Semi Quaver. There are two Demi Semi Quavers in Semi Quaver and two Hemi demi semi quavers in a Demi sem quaver.

8. The time measure for the five Jātis could normally be written as follows :

4/4	—	CATURASRAM	—	Four crotchets in a bar
3/4	—	TRYASRAM	—	Three crotchets in a bar
5/4	—	KANḌAM	—	Five crotchets in a bar
7/4	—	MIŚRAM	—	Seven crotchets in a bar
9/4	—	SANKĪRṆAM	—	Nine crotchets in a bar

Barring the first, viz., Caturasram, the rest can be used for the Cāpu tālas.

9. The time measure of the pause (silence) or rest is denoted by the symbols as in illustration 6 below.

ILLUSTRATION 6

MINIM —

CROTCHES —

QUAVER —

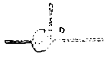
SEMI QUAVER —

DEMI SEMI QUAVER —

HEMI DEMI SEMI QUAVER —

A dot next to any symbol would mean half of the time measure of the symbol which precedes the dot. For example, the value of a dot next to a crotchet would mean a beat of the foot to the value of a crotchet followed by a rest to the value of a quaver. (See illustration 7)

ILLUSTRATION 7



means the beat of the left foot to the value of a crotchet followed by a pause to the value of a quaver. The total value of

is equal to

10. The Sollukattu (Rhythmic syllables) of the corresponding aḍavu is written below the beats.

11. The hand gestures are to be explained separately only.

CONCLUSION :

Under the thirteen groups of Aḍavus, I have recorded in notation, 114 variations in a detailed monograh. This record is only a collection of the contemporary practice. But still, I have no belief that Bharatanāṭyam technique can be mastered with just the help of this notation. This record is only an aid to remembrance. The success of musie and dance depends on practice and certainly not their theory.

Thiru A. N. Parasuram :—It augurs well for the future of Bharata Nāṭya that in recent times quite a number of highly educated girls are studying the Śāstra and practising the art. At the same time many eager and intelligent foreign students are also studying the texts and practising the art. This again encourages us to be optimistic about the prospects of Bharata Nāṭya in the years to come.

Kumari Padma Subramanyam who gave an illustrated talk at this seminar, is a Master of Arts of the Madras University and has done research work in Bharata Nāṭya at the Annāmalai University and has already submitted a thesis for a doctorate. She is a practising artiste whose creative skill is widely appreciated. In the course of her dance recitals, she has choreographed some aṅgaharas and revived some desilasyaṅgas like Sukhalasa.

Such revivalists must always be prepared to encounter criticism from at least two quarters—from those who study only the text of Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra* and those who believe that what used to be presented in dances associated with temple rituals or in the so-called Sadir Nāṭya or Nautch programmes, exhaust the range of the Indian tradition. Critics of this type would confine Indian dance tradition within a rigid frame work and thus allow no scope for the vital creative spirit which has animated the art of dance in India from time immemorial.

Some chapters of the *Nāṭya Śāstra* attributed to the seer Bharata, constitute the earliest available text on the theory and practice of Indian dance. Competent scholars are of the opinion that this work cannot be later than 500 B.C. as its grammar and prosody have links with Vedic traditions and its vocabulary includes words which would be irregular according to Pāṇini, or which are retained only in various Prakrit dialects. That Bharata himself did not consider his work to be exhaustive, comes out from his statement that many points would be amplified and added to by Kohala, Battila, Asita, Badari, Kerala, Koutsa and others who constitute the hundred so-called Bharata-putras. This term may also mean the (spiritual) sons of Bharata i.e., his disciples, or contemporaries. Pāṇini refers to the Naṭasutras of Silalin and Krisasva. All these suggest that Bharata must have codified and systematised the dance practices current at his time and the theories underlying them. This does not mean that he intended his work to be the last word on the subject, the beginning and the end of the tradition. Nor did subsequent writers take this view.

As is usual in India, the *Nāṭya Śāstra* has been studied and re-studied creatively through the centuries, and every age has produced its commentaries or manuals or expositions. King Matrigupta of Kashmir was an early commentator. We have had writers like Bhoja, Sagaranandin, Nandikeśwāra, Sārṅgadeva, Jayasenāpathi and others. In the wealth of available interpretations of Bharata, there are many conflicting views.

One characteristic feature of the evolution of Indian dance tradition is its continuous enrichment through the assimilation of new movements and gestures, fulfilling the purpose of the art, and not found in Bharata. Sometimes a distinction is made between margi and dēśi forms in dance. That is, the former being regarded as classical, while the latter as inferior. Kallinatha, a commentator on Sarṅgadeva defines dēśi as that which is not found in Bharata. Narada to whom is attributed an extensive work, *Dēśi Nṛita Samudra*, describes dēśi music as that which is not governed by universally accepted rules but varies from region to region. It is thus suggested that while the classical form is universal and enduring, the dēśi forms are regional and limited to particular times also. However, dēśi forms which have enduring value can be incorporated into the classical tradition after being refined.

The word 'tradition' itself means a long established and generally accepted custom or method of procedure, of a body of teachings transmitted for the main part orally from generation to generation since early times. A tradition which has a long history and continues to live even in our present age must have within it seeds of endless growth and development. As a matter of fact, it may be claimed that Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra* has the rigorous logic, comprehensiveness and the touch of infinity which characterise Indian thought and achievement in many directions. The pattern suggested by Bharata has scope for diversification and assimilation of new forms. At the same time it also affords a glimpse of or contact with the infinite through the aesthetic experience it produces.

Abhinava Gupta, a great name in aesthetics, edited a text of Bharata, simplified by paraphrase and interpretation and referring to various preceding interpreters. In a way this work may be regarded as the authentic exposition of the classical form of the art as understood in its days. Subsequently, writers like Someswara III, the Chalukya king, in his *Mānasollāsa* brought into the classical tradition some dēśi forms. Sarṅgadeva and Jayasenāpati were contemporaries in the 13th century and, have enriched the classical tradition with dēśi materials, while the former has not kept apart the new and old forms. But the latter has devoted

separate chapters to what is found in Bharata and what has later become assimilated with the dance tradition.

We can easily visualise how dēśi dance forms can attain margi status. Scholars and dancers would observe new forms, new movements, new modes of communicating ideas and emotions and introduce them into dance programmes. Theorists and teachers would examine them, refine them and then assimilate them into the main body of tradition. The newer forms assimilated to the old tradition are like new members in a growing family. This movement of assimilation and enrichment is constant and continuous and we must expect it to go on so long as art pursues beauty and is sustained by the creative spirit.

In Bharata Nāṭya, the new material brought into the tradition is of two kinds. We have additional stanakas, karaṇas bhramaries, padas, caris, gatis etc. We have also some regional dance forms like Perani, Rasaka, Çindu, Kanduka etc. For example, Bharata has not dealt with movements of the knee, the shanks, the tongue or the toes. Additional movements of the lip and feet are mentioned by later writers. A regional dance from a tribe has been accepted in the Gondali.

It is also true at the same time that some forms of dance mentioned in old texts have gone out of use. This may be due to various reasons. The need for them may have disappeared owing to their inadequacy or due to the discovery of a more satisfying substitute. Sometimes valuable features, may have become forgotten owing to lack of teachers or suitable patronage for artists. But when we speak of the preservation and renewal of tradition, we must mean only the imparting of a fresh life and vigour to forgotten but valuable features and their preservation against future neglect.

Kumari Padma Subramanyam has been taking special pains to revive the performance of angaharas, and some lasyaṅgas like Sukhalasa. An aṅgahara is a combination in particular sequence of a few karaṇas. The karaṇas themselves are dance forms made up of certain body movements, hand gestures and steps. Now the

descriptions of karaṇas and aṅgaharas vary in some details from writer to writer. However it may be said that Sarṅgadeva and Jayasenāpati settled the features of the karaṇas with some degree of finality. Most of the karaṇas continued to be employed to a greater or smaller extent at all times. But teachers and students sometimes taught and practised them without knowing them as karnas or knowing them under different names. For example the āgamas name some karaṇas differently—Urdvajanu is called Bhujaṅgalalita while Sivaparākrama, a compilation from āgamas, describes it as Sandyatāṇḍava. In the circumstances we have to find out what has exactly been lost or neglected and how much of it is worthy of revival and then proceed to encourage the revival and preservation of what has been found to be valuable.

The difficulty encountered in such revival can be overcome only when we have a public equipped with critical knowledge. Courses in dance appreciation will have to be conducted by artistes equally at home in theory and practice. When we have created a theatre-going public, sensitive to artistic beauty and eagerly on the look out for new forms, it will be unnecessary to make any special efforts to revive or preserve our ancient and precious heritage in dance. Till then we must learn to labour and to wait.

Dr. K. R. Hanumanthan:—The question whether Bharata wae indebted to the Dravidian school of dancing or not has provoked a lively controversy among the participants of the seminar. I am afraid that the discussion on that issue has produced more heat than light. Arguments both for and against the proposition were equally vehement. When Hon'ble Justice Maharajan raised this issue in the last meeting Miss Padma the learned speaker of this evening categorically stated that she could not find any passage in Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra* to show on that it is in any way indebted to the Dravidian school of dancing. From her statements, it appeared as if all other schools of dancing in India are derived from Bharata's *Nāṭya Sāśtra* which is the only fundamental Nāṭya school unpolluted by any other school. In a country like Bharat which teems with a variety of cultures such a statement seems to be rather far-fetched. We must approach this issue dispassionately without any pre-conceived notion.

For a long time it used to be the fashion among scholars especially Sanskrit scholars, to declare that eveything worthwhile in Indian culture, flowed only from the North and the South was merely a passive receiver and assimilator. Further it was usual to say that such of those grand features in the Indian culture were Aryan and the Dravidians had nothing to contribute. Such statements were born out of an innate hatred or prejudice for everything Southern or Dravidian. It is high time that we disabuse of our minds from such prejudices. The terms Aryan and Dravidian need not engender any bias in the approach of scholars. It was Maxmuller who popularised the term' Aryan and Bishop Caldwell who propagated the word Dravidian among the literary public. Both of them have categorically stated that the terms have no ethnical connotation whatsoever and they denote purely cultural differences. The North Indian culture as revealed from Sanskrit and other Aryan language sources is termed as Aryan and the South Indian culture as revealed from Tamiḻ and other Dravidian language sources is called as Dravidian. That is all. It cannot be argued that the Aryan and Dravidian group of languages are the same. They reveal distinct features, grammatically, phonetically and otherwise. The culture traits revealed from the ancient literature of those two groups of languages also reveal certain marked differences. Of course they have mingled in the passage of time and produced a composite culture which is now called Indian. But to assert that the Indian culture is out and out Aryan and the Dravidian contribution is nil is a generalisation which is hardly acceptable. The cultural exchange was never a one way traffic. Both have their own contributions to the evolution of Indian culture and there is no point in arguing the superiority of one culture over the other. Indian cultural fabric has been woven out of the of Aryan culture with the woof of Dravidian. If the problem under discussion is approached from such an angle, a lot of mist that has gathered round it can easily be cleared. The South Indian people and their culture also must have been as ancient as those of North India. They ought to have developed their own system of music, dancing, sculpture and architecture. Comparative freedom from foreign invasions could have enabled

them to evolve their culture into a complete and consistent whole. That is why we find Bharata Natya and Karnatic music still living in the South rather than in the North. Simply because their theories are expounded in Sanskrit, it cannot be asserted that they had their origin in the North. Sanskrit was a court language and the *lingua franca* of the Intelligentia for quite a long time in India and therefore even South Indians or Dravidians translated the Dravidian works into Sanskrit. Writers in North India were also much influenced by the culture traits found in South Indian writings.

In fact Bharata himself accepts that there existed in the South, a school of dancing with its own peculiar gestures and limb movements. In chapter fourteen it is said as follows. "*Tatra Dākṣiṇāṭya bhavāt, bahugīta, nṛtta Vādya, Kaisiki praya, Catura madhura lalitha angābhinayā*" (as found in Ch. 14, verse 36, in the Baroda edition and Ch. 13, verse 25; in Bombay edition).

The above passage is translated as follows. "Now (it is said) in that connection that the Southern (countries) favour various kinds of dances, songs and instrumental music, an abundance of graceful (Kaisik) style and clever and graceful gestures."

In this passage Bharata has referred to a system of dancing in the South. He speaks of four local usages or dance varieties namely Avanti, Daksinatya, Pancali and Odhra-Magadhi in verse No. 36 and in verses 38 and 39 he adds that countries like Dravida (Tamil), Andhra, Maharashtra, Vainna and Vanavasika which lie between the Southern ocean and Vindhya (mountain) are always to take to the Daksinatya local usages. It is this Daksinatya school of dancing and music which go by the name of Bharata Natya and Karnatic music in the South. It is about this system *Silappathikaram* and *Koothanool* in Tamil have spoken of in detail. Bharata is aware of such a distinct school of dancing in the South and he ought to have been influenced by it in his exposition and systematisation of dancing pattern in India.

The Chairman **in his concluding remarkr thanked the Leader and the other speakers for the very interesting contribution at the Seminar.**

III

REPORTS OF SEMINARS

The Institute of Traditional Cultures held a seminar at 4 P.M. on Wednesday the 19th February 1975 in Room No. 48 of the Madras University Departmental Buildings on "TRADITIONAL HINDUISM AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT" led by Thiru Murugesa Mudaliar, B.A., The following is a report of the proceedings of the seminar.

Present:

Dr. K. K. Pillay, M.A., D.Litt., D.Phil. (Oxon.) in chair.

Thiru N. Murugesa Mudaliar, B.A., Leader.

An audience of 33 persons was present.

The Chairman introduced the Leader and requested him to lead the seminar.

TRADITIONAL HINDUISM & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Thiru N. Murugesa Mudaliar

I. Preliminary

The object of this paper is to examine how far Traditional Hinduism or what may be called classical Hinduism can sustain India's development in the present time. It is generally supposed that tradition is inimical, at any rate, not conducive to modern progress. The mere fact that a religion has survived many centuries is not a guarantee of its adjustments to a modern society which for good or bad, has to break away from some part at least of its rigidities, taboos and compulsions. Although religion, old or new, is not the only factor affecting social life, it doubtless plays a great part in influencing men's attitudes and outlook. With today's trend of secularism in the body politic and scepticism in personal beliefs in God and salvation and, a distrust in the efficacy of religion to the extent of its being considered as sham, the old religions with

their *patina* of superstition and irrationalism in certain aspects are regarded more as a hindrance than help to social progress. Society, whether capitalistic or socialistic, has not much use of religion notwithstanding some of its good aspects like the moral code and formal disciplines. Those who challenge the old, see no need to create a new religion after their heart because, to them Man is at the centre of all their concern and not God or the Life hereafter. The modern predicament seems to dispense with any such desideratum. This however is only one aspect of the problem. Religion divides as well as unites. In its own sphere it is a unifying factor and it does promote social good. But this is not to subscribe to the fact that religion should be unchanging. The sap of its vitality can to some extent nourish modern needs for growth and fulfilment.

II. Concept of Development

Hinduism is a blanket term which covers both the sophisticated religion and philosophy of a rather small minority and the religious beliefs and customs of the overwhelming majority. In this study we shall take largely into account the socio-religious factors like *varnāśrama*, *karma* and fate, untouchability etc. which militate against progress and keep Hindu society a closed society and push to the background the doctrine of *abheda* which enjoins one to see Divinity in a Brahmin or Chandala. The benumbing factors like looking upon another man's poverty or pain as his Karma are repugnant to modern ideas like social justice. The noble doctrines like universal love are submerged by orthodoxy and die-hardism. Traditional Hinduism combines the bad and good points and so we shall take into account both to assess how far it can prove a power for social reconstruction.

So far as 'development' is concerned, for the purposes of this study, it will cover the whole man, leaving aside neither the economical nor the spiritual man. The term will not have the specialised meaning of Herbert Spencer, viz. as a first principle through all the avenues of human thought and evolution, but any view in which interest in human welfare is central. I shall take humanism to mean any view, religious, philosophical or social

which has for its central interest, human welfare and human destiny. I shall not identify it with the specialised concepts of Compte or Schiller or other philosophers of these schools in the West or their modern counterparts in the East which apotheosises worship of humanity and the primacy of practical reason.

As Hinduism, classical or modern, is not atheistic, I shall direct my investigation broadly as "a shared quest for the good life" whether a belief in a personal God or a Transcendental Brahman is or is not the central tenet. I shall take Man as the centre of all considerations of this traditional religion. 'Traditional' and 'modern' do not necessarily mean periodic divisions in time as doubtless the ethos of the same religion undergoes changes on account of several factors. As humanism and development are materialistic (using the term in its broad sense) Hinduism will be treated both as practical religion and philosophy. And as the development of India as a whole and not of Hindu India or Buddhist India or Muslim India or Christian India is my concern, the interactions and influences of all these religions cannot be left out. Development does not take place in buried cells and even spiritual development does not take place in isolation, and doubtless, religion has its special contribution and individuality.

In an age of science and democracy the question naturally is asked what religion does for national or international development? Could it increase the material resources or enhance the life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Could not these objectives be secured by science, technology and equal opportunity for all? Is religion so necessary in an underdeveloped country where the first essential is to remove poverty and misery of the masses. In my view it is possible to make an ideal of development but supposing we achieved affluence by pushing religion to the background, is it certain that affluence will guarantee peace and happiness? Will affluence be enjoyed in isolation? There can be fear and danger in the midst of plenty. It will soon be discovered that in a transient earth, development leads to nowhere without God and immortality. If then faith in God's dispensation is necessary, what is the way in which we can understand it and

put ourselves in harmony with His purpose and design. It is easy to lose the gains of development as it is easy to fall over a cliff. Human history is not a smooth gradient of soft ascents to lead the Belvedere of happiness. Progress and Regress and Development and Disaster are opposites ever present. The world needs something more than a soft gospel of automatic development. It is from this angle I shall discuss the scope and relevance of Classical Hinduism to today's problems in India in a broad comprehension. Some one defined religious history of Christian countries as six centuries of Catholicism, three centuries of Protestantism and a century of agnosticism. I do not know where we stand today in Hindusim but I am persuaded to think that the century of agnosticism has not yet crept in, but we are still in a phase of protest. We have to examine how far old conventions and shibboleths are against social justice and secular progress.

III. Vēdic and Āgamic Hinduism

A consideration of the origins of Hinduism usually started, till recently, with the Vēdic period but we must now go back to the Mohenjadaro period which is roughly dated at 5000 B.C. There is some evidence about the religion of the inhabitants of the Indus valley although not so much as about their civilization. The figures on the Indus seals and the writings on them to the extent deciphered by the Finnish and Russian scholars indicate that the religion of the Harappans was a proto Pāsupata cult. The Pasupati in a yogic posture with horns as headgear and surrounded by animals found on a seal and the discovery of cylindrical stones resembling '*liṅgam*' in the excavations strongly suggest Śiva worship. There are, however, no literary materials regarding this cult as yet, as we find in the case of Vēdic religion. There is no evidence that the entry of Vēdic Aryans was anterior to the Harappan civilization and how the Harappan civilization came to an abrupt end. There was no doubt, however, that the Harappans enjoyed a highly developed civilisation—an urban civilisation with planned towns and amenities, and commerce with the outside world. In my opinion the religion of the Harappans was akin to Āgamic as we know it today as they obviously had an idea of one God and they worshipped a symbol and attached importance

to meditation as opposed to sacrifice and rituals. They were not Nature-worshippers or ritualists like the early Vēdic people. The habitual belief that the Āgamas were lost for about some time and recovered in part more or less simultaneously with the Upanishadic period, coincides with the disappearance of the Harappans and the rise of the Vēdic people. The fact that the Āgamas became more important in the east, north and south of the sub-continent and is still influential supports the view that the classical Hinduism was as much Āgamic as Vēdic. Ancient writers agree that both Vēdas and Āgamas are from the mouth of God and that while the Vēdas are general, the Āgamas are special. By this it is meant that the Āgamas are for the more advanced. I am stressing this fact because what prevails today all over the continent is Āgamic religion only and Vēdic religion is now referred to only by the token name of Sanātana Dharma. The element in both the strands have survived but ultimately Hinduism today is more Āgamic than Vēdic. In considering India's development we have to attach importance to practical religion and not merely to meet myths and apologetics.

Some might suggest that there is no such religion as Hinduism as that word refers to the way of life of a people east of the Indus. Doubtless Hinduism is diverse, because it "extended a promise of ultimate treasure to so great a variety of seekers of salvation". Some would call it as a family of religions because it comprises a wide range of beliefs and practices, although distinction would be made between its broader and narrower aspects. The early Aryans in their eastward march formed two branches, one stopping in Persia and the other entering the Gangetic plain. The difference in religious outlook between the groups is apparent in the contents of *Zendavesta* and the early Rig Vēdic hymns. The Vēdic hymns are prayers offered to a single or more deities and they reveal a form of Nature worship. Some of the deities invoked were of ancient times, and faith in some of them was shared by other people like Iranians, Hittites and even Greeks and Romans, apart from Indra, Varuṇa and Rudra. Some were liturgic gods like Brahmanaspati important only to the priests who performed the sacrifices. The *Yajur Vēda* mostly in prose supplied

dedications, prayers and litanies to accompany the devotional use of the *Rig Vēda*. *Sāma Vēda* is a collection of rhythmic chants for the use of the singing priests. The *Atharva Vēda* is a treatise on charms, incantations and spells. Prayer, wonder, anger, passion, hate, curses, blessings all form part of these hymns and chants. They were the exhuberant expression of a people who saw promise of great things to come and wanted continued securiry. At about this time, the Aryan occupation resulted in a formation of a number of groups and classes in which colour or Varṇa played a part. Varṇa is usually interpreted as colour. It can also be interpreted as referring to different speeches. Those who accepted the new form of worship formed themselves into three classes Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaiśya and those who did not accept the new rituals were dubbed as 'a-vaidikis' and considered as not twice born, and as 'Sudras' to do service from outside their places of rituals. The religion of this kind is rightly called Brahminic, as ritualism of the Brahmanas and the Āraṇyakas which are part of the Vēdas were the engrossing elements of the religion. It was a period of priestly domination and the mantras uttered by them were considered magical. The holy power in the sacrificial prayer, called Brahma, had become a matter of superstition. The priests were believed to occupy a place by means of this power to reach all places in earth, hell and heaven and indeed even to change cosmic events. The Brahmanas which were compiled as discourses or text books for priests of different schools contained repetitions of mantras and incantations with some hint of philosophy here and there. The ardent prayers and the visions of Vēdic seers went into the background and the compilers of Brahmanas postulated a power that should exact the obedience of gods and men and called it 'Brahman'. The era of enquiry and speculation had not commenced till the Upanishads were written much later. These were *not*, it must be noted, the work of priests. The Sāṅkhyas, the earliest philosophical school in India, for example, did *not* acknowledge the authority of Vēdas and in fact were the first to start a rational enquiry into the nature of the universe, the Prakriti, and the active principle over it Puruṣa. So we find in the Upanishads, dialogues and dissertations not between

the priests but between Riṣis, Kṣatriyas, Kings, ordinary folks and even women. There were attempts at profound interpretations of Reality which was above the nature worship and pantheism and polytheism of the Brahmanas. Some of the Upaniṣads showed a marked trend towards monism. This is the period of philosophic Hinduism as distinguished from the Vēdic Ritualism, the Hinduism of the earlier phase. At this period, there is less concern in the tribe and the class and, less hankering after rewards from gods for a bounteous enjoyment of life. The concept of 'Brahman' and 'Ātman' as an ultimate in substance and infinite in essence came to dawn. It was the Sāṅkhyas who gave a jolt to ritualism and priest-ridden Vēdic religion. It was at this time that there was greater intercourse with the South where it was believed that the Āgamas were born and the system of worship was monotheistic and not based on sacrifices to propitiate various gods. While the Upaniṣads later developed only philosophically, the Āgamas remained religio-philosophic and touched the entire people and not only a few enquirers in forests. While the Vēdic worship was on lawns or swept-ground, the Āgamic worship was in enclosed places for the whole community to participate and, the early worship was symbolic like the installation of a *liṅga* (or symbol of Śiva) under a tree. The relation between the "Objective—All" and the "Supreme Self" has been the concern of both the Upaniṣads and the Āgamas. The Āgamas comprised of two parts i.e. modes of worship and theology. The earlier Upaniṣads spoke in two voices. While Upaniṣads like Brahadāraṇyaka spoke of the identiy of the Brahman and the Self, some gave a different view. Later Upaniṣads like Svētasvatāra alone unequivocally gave a theistic relation. These are sometimes called Āgamic Upaniṣads. They conformed to the Āgamas which spoke of one Supreme (whether Śiva, Viṣṇu or Śakthi) and many souls which become one in essence with Brahman only in *mukti* or liberation.

IV. Encounter with Buddhism and Jainism

The speculation of the Upaniṣads gave rise to religious dogmas, particularly *saṃsāra*—the cycle connecting Karma and rebirth which, far from solving the riddle of life only helped to

endow Varṇāśrama, a metaphysical strength which inherently it had not. The concept of transmigration of souls and rebirth is not peculiar to Hinduism alone as it is also found in other ancient religions in some form or other, but in India it assumed a terrible importance. Rebirth was not merely the fruit of past karma but it denied freedom of acction in the present birth, and society had no relation to affect one's progress in that birth. While Mahāvīra and Buddha, the early teachers who departed from Vēdic religion believed in rebirth, their doctrines did not postulate a fettered conduct in the present life. Mahāvira resented the spiritual and social ascendancy of the priestly class and did not accept the view that the world was not a reality. He looked upon all creatures alike and denied hypothetical souls or a world-soul. All this placed importance on strict self-discipline and non-injury to others as the only means of self-conquest, i.e. to become a Jiva. Karma, soul and salvation assumed a different world-view from that of Brahmanism. Infinite perfection was regarded as freedom from all material taint when the soul joins other perfect souls in Iṣatprabhāsa. There is no Supreme Ruler as in Brahminism. The perfected souls are also finite beings and they will not be of help to beings at lower levels. Hence, salvation is self-attained. This perfection is by asceticism, by the fulfilment of the five vows of (1) non-killing (2) freedom from anger, greed, fear and untruth (3) renouncing all that is not given, (4) renouncing sexual pleasures and (5) renouncing all attachments. Jainism held that only the free and purified self possessed perfect knowledge and till then all knowledge was relative and transient and that every proposition cannot be absolutely right or absolutely false (*asti, nāsti*). The opposition to Jainism was not so much to its philosophy of knowledge but to its atheism and to its replacement of Vēdic rites by ascetic practices.

Buddhism which followed Jainism within a generation had some similarities with the latter but differed widely in other respects. Gautama denied the efficacy of the Vēdic rituals and the prescriptive right of the priesthood to show the way to salvation. He discounted speculations about the Ultimate Reality and even refused to posit an entity as soul. He modified the current concept

of the law of Karma and transmigration in the sense that a person in any station in life can by giving up desires overcome *saṃsāra*. Rebirth is the inevitable concomitant of the will-to-live and have or *tanha*. He did not subscribe to the view of on imperishable soul passing over from one existence to another He did not see permanence in a continuing entity. What is considered an immortal soul is resolved back into an impermanent aggregation or composite of a constantly changing states of being or *skandhas* viz., body, sense, perception, feelings, subconscious instincts and reason. It is the union of these that constitute the individual, but each is in a perpetual flux. The ego is merely a functional unity. All that passes over to the next life is the karma-laden experience. It is like one light lighting another, or a piece of poetry passing from one's mouth to another with actually nothing passing over. Although it is difficult to understand this theory, what Buddhism suggested was that what a man does and thinks now, he carries over into his future life and it is not conditioned by anything like caste or prayers. Here then was a strictly humanistic view based on psychological foundations. In the broader conception there was no need for a sovereign person or God to hold everything together in unity. What is real is the possibility of the individual self to annihilate itself and pass into a featureless purity or *Nirvāna*. It is foolish to cling with longing the sentient type which is nothing but old age, sickness and pain. The ethical problem which man has to face is in what way ought one live to obtain or earn freedom from pain and suffering and bring to an end the will to live and have, and pass on to *nirvāna* through *arhatship* or fitness. As a practical way of life Buddhism suggested the eightfold path of (1) right belief, (2) right aspiration, (3) right speech, (4) right conduct, (5) right means of livelihood, (6) right effort, (7) right mindfulness (8) right meditation. Buddhism would not have had so great an effect in the history of religion in India if the *arhat* ideal of self-salvation through killing of desires was not balanced by the ideal of self-salvation through compassionate goodwill to all living beings. The later developments of Buddhism, however, came nearer to Hinduism with some sort of Gods restored, with faith in prayer and some kind of worship. This was

paradoxically called Mahāyāna or the great road or vehicle and the earlier called Hīnayāna.

V. Brahmin reaction

The influence that Jainism and Buddhism had on Hinduism in the early stages was negligible. The Buddha himself declared that he did not teach anything new but pointed out to what he did not teach. It was the priests that made it a religion of dissent and divergence. While the secondary teachings of Jainism and Buddhism like compassion had some appeal for the masses, the keynote of asceticism and pessimism did not cut much ice. The adoption of Buddhism by emperors Aśoka and Kaniṣka, however, made it spread to other lands outside the country of its origin. The branding of the two religions as opposed to the Vēdas by the orthodox Vaidiks and the later degeneracy of the cults themselves led to a powerful reaction against them. Non-killing stressed by them resulted in some reform in Vēdic rituals where the sacrifice of animals became nominal or symbolic. The Mimāmsakas or literalistic would not, however, wish to depart from the old rituals. The Buddhistic philosophy of *nirvāna* had however a powerful appeal to intellectuals that Ācharya Śaṅkara had to develop the concept of an attributeless 'Brahman'. Besides the effect of deviating from rituals, the Buddha preached in Prakrit, the language of the people (and not in Sanskrit) which gained such an accession of faith in him and gave a newer interpretation of the old religion which was sunk in ritualism and superstition and, a better understanding of the concept of Brahman. The Buddha was soon made an *avatār* of Viṣṇu. Buddhism became truly humanistic because it made Man to study his own nature and made the centre of all reflection his predicament rather than on a transcendental Brahman. In my opinion Buddha was, besides a Humanist, the first Existentialist in the modern sense. But even in countries outside India to which Buddhism has spread, it underwent gross transformation and even Zen Buddhism is not the same as the original doctrine but adapted to Shintoism. But by and large the three principles of *Buddham gachāmi*, *Saṅgam gachāmi* and *Dharmam gachāmi* made it a practical religion as it gave the ideal of a teacher, the concept of community and an ethical basis. Brahminism

far from refuting Buddhism absorbed more conspicuously the doctrine of quenching desire and the excellence of the eight-fold noble paths and the doctrine of *ahimsa* which tacitly accepted the reality of evil in a so-called illusory world, postulated by some Upaniṣads and later metaphysicians.

VI. The Code of Manu and Varṇāśrama

To eclipse the Buddhistic influence, the code of Manu was formulated by Hindu positivists, which stressed the ethical doctrines and at the same time gave the caste system (varṇāśrama) a more cast-iron frame work to sustain the priestly religion. The rituals went into the background but the ceremonies of caste or *samskāras* became inviolable. A further strengthening of Hinduism was the emergence of *Bhagavad Gita* as the comprehensive doctrine and practical guide of the Vēdāntic Hinduism. It is a wonderful and masterly synthesis and its philosophy is clearly theistic. It has a never-ending appeal but one of the tenets engrained in it is the *Varṇāśrama.* Arjuna by his own individual nature wants to transcend caste duty and abstain from fighting his kinsmen. But Krisṇa exalts his caste duty as above every other consideration. The argument that there is neither the slain nor the slayer is specious and in any case the philosophic argument need not be used to scaffold caste duty. The undertaking of war to maintain dharma may be ordinary dharma, but not the higher dharma of abstaining from it. Arjuna, however, was inclined to stand by what conscience dictated to him. But Krisṇa shows him His real form, over-awes him and compels him to the way of devotion and duty. Thus in the *Bhagavat Gita*, caste has been given a philosophic and social justification. It may be quite rational to suggest that individuals are born in different circumstances but to suggest that the individual must abide by his caste duties appears to be irrational. It would be logical to suggest that to uphold the social order which is certainly necessary, each should follow the path of righteousness and love. But why should the Kṣatriya Arjuna do his caste duty only in his present life and not pursue a higher dharma where killing would not be caste duty. Why is a higher perception of truth denied even in this present birth? This is what one fails to understand. For the sake of *varṇa-saṅgraha* Arjuna

could not rise to the full height of his true nature. Even the later metaphysicians like Sankara, defended this *varṇa dharma.* Although Śaṅkara did not deny Brahman knowledge to Sūdras, he precluded the study of Vēdas by them. Side by side all the rigidity of caste duty and the marriage laws were made so strict that offsprings to males of lower caste, through women of higher caste were stamped as Çandālas and thrown out as casteless. They had to wait for the next or even much later births to have even human privileges. This is absolutely repugnant to the concept of Divinity in every soul. All this might be justified on grounds of racial purity but out of place in any religious system which has for its concern universal progress. This has been a drawback of traditional Hinduism.

VII. Displacement of ritualism and superstition

Even the liberal Āgamic practice of temple worship had to make concessions to the Vaidikis in this matter, but in only prescribed *prāyasçitta* for entry of Chandālas into temples but not a total ban although in actual practice it was interpreted and worked out in that way. The Āgamic religion made all the four paths of *çariya, kriya, yoga* and *jñāna* open to any one without reference to his caste or creed. There have been many low caste saints both Śaiva and Vaiṣnava sects of this religion. These four paths are not the same as Karma, Bhakti, Rāja and Jñāna yogas of the Vēdāntins. With the rise of the Bhakthi school, the Hindu religion became defined as Śaivism, Vaiṣnavism or Śaktaism. Any one who claimed to be a Hindu described himself generally as a Śaivite or Vaiṣnavite only. The six systems of philosophy or *Shad-darśanas,* and later the three schools of Vēdāntism, Advaita, Visiṣtādvaita and Dvaita were only for the scholiasts. The Āgamanta i.e. the Jñāna pada of the Āgamas, which comprised *krlya, upāsana* and *jñāna* was both religion and philosophy, retained a continuing individuality and was called *Siddhānta*—be it Śaiva or Vaiṣnava. This is the living religion of the Hindus right down to this day. The very word Āgama means 'coming down' in nearness. The Āgamas were undoubtedly śrutis but those who wished to identify śrutis with Brahmanas and Āraṇyakas only, divided Āgamas into two branches. They called it *śrauta*

when it did not clash with the Vēdas and *aśrauta* when it so clashed. This was quite immaterial to the Āgamic Hindus. Some of the older Purānas like *Mahā Śivapurāṇa* and *Skanda-purāṇa* would be found, in their expository portions, to be Āgamic only. In fact the vitality of the religion of the Hindus consists in the Upaniṣads and Āgamas only, although the Vēdas contained in parts some of the highest speculations of the human mind. We have thus the heritage of these two streams (vēdic and āgamic) and their fusion is the living theology of the Hindus and this is the truth which has to be proclaimed. Even Śaṅkara was believed to be a tantric and some of his hymns to particular deities bear ample evidence to it. He admired the Dravida śisu (Dravidian child), St. Gñānasambandar who worshipped at every temple with hundreds of devotees following him, to establish the Āgamic faith as the universal faith. St. Sambandar's hymns are spoken of as containing the essence of the *Rig Vēda* and the hymns of St. Tirunāvukkarasu as the essence of the Upaniṣads. Thus the *Tirumaṛais* of Nāyanmārs (and similarly the *Prabandam* of Āḻwārs) are the New Testament of the Hindus and the Āgamic religion was centred round the institution of temples. The utterances of St. Māṇickavaçāgar and St. Nammāḻwār contain the highest religious mysticism. Theset eachers brought religion to the lowest, in every nook and corner of the country. This was the glorious period of religious integration and material prosperity. If offset the monasticism of the Jaina and Buddhists and inaugurated an era of pragmatic realism founded on the highest philosophy. Popular Hinduism was no more based on superstition and rituals and it was based on a philosophy of world acceptance with firm faith in the Grace of God. Later, in North India, although there were not many temples there, the bhakti cult which popularised *saṅkirtanas* (singing the name of God) had a parallel development.

VIII. Period of Protest

As the new resurgent religion was centred round worship of an idol or symbol, the impact of the Western religion in later times (say from the 15th century) took the form principally of an attack on idolatry. The weakness of untouchability (segregation of

pañchamas) which persisted in the social system offered scope for proselytisation. The powerful opinion against untouchability raised by saints in Mahārāshtra and elsewhere was apparently to avert this danger but even here the conservative class, a minority, fought from the last ditch citing Vēdic sanction for untouchability. The former iconoclasm of Muslim invaders gave place to clashes on account of cow-slaughter resisted by the orthodox and the unorthodox Hindu alike on sentimental and religious grounds. Indian society and its secular development were retarded by these religious schisms. Hindu religionists had to face these phenomena both from within and from without. A re-thinking on Hinduism became inevitable at the close of the 19th century. Hindu liberalism was looked upon nevertheless as heterodoxy by the conservatives in the same fold. It was looked upon as the result of the influence of Western education and the advent of science. Doubtless the impulse given to education by British rulers and Christian missionaries was more potent. The Ārya Samāj which adopted the slogan of 'Back to the Vēdas' adopted proselytisation to Hinduism as a counter-blast to activities of Christian missionaries. The Brahmo Samāj, another reformatory movement, wanted to abolish idol worship. Both the movements have not achieved much success although the founders and some of the adherents of the new sects were fine men of culture and radicalism. Social reforms like widow re-marriage and inter-caste marriage were subsidiary products of the new awakening.

Those who turned to Buddhism as an alternative between atheism and Christianity to get out of the Hindu fold were very few in number. Islam was never present as an alternative, and in any case it was not the religion of the ruling power although the British always held out other concessions to the Muslims. Even within the narrow circle of Christain converts, caste persisted as class distinction among themselves. In the South, the non-Brahmin movement which was conceived as a socio-political movement gave political and educational concessions to the untouchables or "the depressed classes" as they were called. It also fought for separate electorates for the depressed classes. It did not seek to abolish caste but worked against the ascendancy of the political Brahmins who were monopolising all positions in the public life

of the country. The latter movement of Periyār E. V. Rāmaswāmi Nāicker, which started as a Self-Respect movement took a dynamic part against the caste distinctions. The followers of this leader who is a confessed atheist with a powerful mass appeal, are atheists (or agnostics by and large) but atheism is not so far as is known a credal requirement for membership in the Drāviḍa Kaḷagam started by Periyār. They are definitely against caste and superstitions and they do not attach their caste title to their names.

XI. Impact of the West

The factors which seemingly make classical or traditional Hinduism as not suited to an age of development are, the impact of Western education and science, the inauguration of social reform movements, the rise of secularism and Marxism. These factors, it will be admitted, are common to all other religions and in every country in the world. Added to this, in India note must be taken of rapid political change in recent years and finally the culmination of the people giving themselves a Constitution which guaranteed some fundamental rights of which, the most important for our present consideration, is the freedom of worship and equality before the law. In spite of the boast of spirituality by the Hindus there has been in the present century, a drift into materialism and less interest in organised religion. Hinduism and Hindu institutions are looked upon with more detachment and critical judgment by the Hindus themselves but they have the same scepticism in other religions. It is only the very poor and ignorant that are attached to other religions. Modernism has not resulted in the option for any other religion to the extent Christianity has found acceptance, for example in Japan. It is Communism that has gained foothold in India with hopes to bring about a new social order by abolishing God, but even Communists in India enumerate themselves as Hindus in public records. While they have abhorrences of the social distinctions based on religion and superstitions, they have an unexpressed admiration of the liberalism and beautiful philosophy of Hinduism. No one need be a Communist to condemn the discrimination in the code of Manu today and to classify the so-called 'Çanḍāḷās' with the

village pig or the homeless dog and to treat the untouchables with contempt. Even a non-Communist political State cannot now subscribe to such distinctions on the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity and, the principles of equality before the law are to be upheld. But society must change radically to make development possible and secular. There is no development possible without all-round efforts to establish a just society. Caste complex has not been eradicated and indeed it works itself with devastating effect on occasions. The self-centredness of religious groups, be they Hindus, Muslims or Christians, even in secular affairs is not a thing of the past. This phenomenon will not vanish unless the major religious group, the Hindus, give up their clannishness. The minority groups will otherwise justify their attitudes on grounds of self-preservation. But it must be conceded that in no other country the major religious group would be less aggressive and more cooperative than in India where the culture is one, be he a Hindu or Christian and, tolerance is the finest flower of the soil nurtured by holy men through the centuries. While the Christians, conversion and the Muslims, intolerance on occasions are resisted by militant groups like the Hindu Mahā Sabha and Rāshtrīya Sēvak Sangh, proselytisation has not been sought to be banned. Mahatma Gandhi fought with Hindu convictions against the evils of Hindu society with great faith and resignation and marked a new era for economic and social freedom to follow political independence, but he paid for it with his life. He laboured also for Hindu–Muslim accord within India and probably he would have given up his life by a hunger-strike but lack of support by his followers and political expedience prevented him from achieving a final success. When he talked of establishing Rāmrāj in India, a few mistook it as a Rāj in which the ideal Rāma would be the model for Indian polity. This was not so because he repeatedly declared without any equivocation which was his finest trait, that he would be no party to Hindu Rāj. Just as the name of the creed of 'Satyāgraha' was peculiarly Indian, so also was the term 'Rāmrāj'. The first requisite of Ramrāj as the real Swarāj was self-introspection and every individual and every community should magnify its own faults a thousand-fold and shut its eyes to the

fault of its neighbours. That, he said, was the way to real progress. He further defined Rāmrāj as a State where every limb of Government would ever be thinking of people and their needs. Rāmrāj was proclaimed as the other name of the kingdom of God on earth. The latter term would not be understood by the teeming millions of India but Rāmrāj would be easily understood. But Gandhiji did not speak of abolition of varnāśrama under Rāmrāj although he roundly condemned untouchability. The inconsistency was not easily explainable.

X. Threshold of Modernity

Jawaharlal Nehru, though more radical than Gandhi and less traditional, acknowledges that the old concept of social organisation and philosophy has come down to this day and that it would not have been the case if it had no virtue to stabilise society and conform to life's conditions. At the same time he felt that ultimately if it is to fail and become a drag and hindrance and the evil in it had to overcome its virtue, it cannot be treated as an isolated phenomenon. Religion in India is not a dogma but a working hypothesis of conduct adapted to different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life. A dogma can be believed in and isolated from life but a working hypothesis of human conduct, Nehru argued, must work and conform to life or it obstructs life. The very *raison d'etre* of such hypothesis is its workableness, its conformity to life and its capacity to adapt itself to changing conditions. If it does not fulfil this function, it goes off at a tangent from the core of life, loses contact with social needs and the distance between it and life grows, it loses all its vitality and significance. Nehru says that the idea of progress is relatively modern even in the West. In India the past was built on security and stability. The social structure based on caste system and joint families served the purpose. The individual was allowed perfect freedom to think and behave as he liked but he had to conform stricly to social and current usage. It was opposed to Indian philosophy which was highly individualistic and dealt almost entirely with the individual's growth to some inner perfection. So long as stability and security were the chief ends, the structure functioned more or less successfully. It was under-

mined by economic change and when the real challenge came from the new dynamic conception of social progress, it could not be fitted into the old static ideas. People have necessarily to get out of their old ruts and think in terms of progress that will give security, which is not stagnation.

It is thus clear that religion need not bar India's progress but social institutions which claim religious sanctions that is the bane. Classical Hinduism is not wholly immune to progress. The old structure had three bases—the autonomous village community, the caste and the joint family. Al! the three have given way, but caste much less than the other two. While the other two factors are secular, caste pretends to have religious sanctions. In forming a new social structure there is no substitute for it in evidence. It was this that made Sir George Birdwood declare (but this was many years ago), that "So long as the Hindus hold to the caste system, India will be India, but from the day they break from it there will be no more India." I think this is an exaggerated view. Of course there would be suffering and pain to bring into existenee a new society geared to the concept of progress, and not merely stability, but it will come with a bang if it is not allowed by stupid opposition to evolve even gradually. The alternative would be an atheistie society wedded to Communism. If that happens, it would not be the fault of classical Hinduism, but of those hide-bound reactionaries who claim to protect it and speak for it—those conservatives who cling to the subtleties of old śastras. Even Śaṅkara warned against *śāstra vardhanam*, i.e. too much importance to śāstras. It is a warning to be heeded, better late than never.

XI. Growth of intellectual liberalism

Luckily a reform movement in Hinduism started from the days of Rām Mohan Roy, Keshāb Chandra Sen and Dayānand Saraswati and was sustained spiritually by the non-sectarian teachings of the great saint Śri Rāmakriṣna. Swāmi Vivēkaṇanda preached Vēdānta that recognised the Divinity in every man, be he a Brahmin, Chandāla and he was convinced that only that could be the religion of thinking humanity. For true Vēdānta should

not only be spiritual but also rational and in harmony with the scientific investigations of external nature. He warned that the caste had become a degradation and it was meaningless to indulge in metaphysical discussions and arguments in its support. He ridiculed the attitude of die-hards by saying, "Our religion is in the kitchen, our God is the cooking pot, and our religion is "do not touch me, I am holy". He was the leader who wanted to combine Western progress with India's spiritual background. "Make a European society with India's religion", he said. He was international in outlook as he said that problems which were only national 20 years previously could no longer be solved on national grounds only. He professed himself to be a socialist not because it was a perfect system but because half a loaf is better than no bread. He would rather prefer a man to be an atheist than superstitious, because if superstition enters, the brain is gone. He pointed out that although Hindus might claim at having arrived at Vēdāntism, the followers of Islam in the work-a-day life were preaching equality of all man. He was a realist and was courageous in facing the truth.

Tagore and Gandhi are the other two outstanding figures who interpreted classical Hinduism in a modern light to make it an instrument for progress and development. In his Hibbert Lectures of 1930 on the 'Religion of Man', Tagore has expressed his credo that the God of religion is not a God of cosmic force but rather a God of human personality. He said that, "Is your Upaniṣads—the Super Soul—which permeates all moving things, is the God of this human universe whose mind we share in all our true knowledge, love and service and who reveals in ourselves.?" In his poetic imagination, he spelled out the humanism of the religion of India "The original plot of the mother spirit of Life has retired into the background, giving full prominence in the third act to the spirit of Man, though the dowager queen from her inner apartment still renders necessary help". Humanism, he defined, is the creation of a surplus in human spirit by not making religion to enclose ourselves in mere physical or material interest. A verse in *Atarva Vēda* says "Righteousness, truth, great endeavours, empire, religion, enterprise, heroism and prosperity, the past

and the future, dwell in the surpassing strength of the surplus." National or international development consists in measuring the surplus in Man—his human spirit. We have to seek the religion of a people not in their Gods but in man who dreamed of his own infinity and majestically worked for all time. Such a religion is surely apparent in the Upaniṣads of the classical Hinduism. But this human surplus cannot be permanent unless sustained by an ethical consciousness. We find this need stressed in the Epics and the *Purānas* and probably greatly influenced by Zorastrianism which explained this doctrine. This is something more than the ethical basis of Karma. *Zend Avasta* says "All the joys of life which Thou holdest, O Mazda, the joys that were, the joys that are, and the joys that shall be, Thou dost apportion all in Thy Love for us". We find a parallelism of this in the *Bhagavat Gita*. In the religion of Man, the infinite becomes defined in Human and comes close to us to need our love and co-operation. To the extent we give this love and co-operation progress and development would be a reality. Simplicity of spiritual expression is the highest form of the religion of progress and such an expression will be manifest in art and music, because progress does not necessarily consist in building more steel mills and factories. The fever of progress for a better life has the danger of becoming a epidemic of moral poverty, greed, hatred and cut-throat competition and class war—a universal churning up of jealousy. This is symbolised long years ago in the story of the churning of the milky ocean by the Asuras and Dēvas which brought forth nectar as well as poison and Śiva had to take unto Himself the poison to save the universe. Progress and development cannot be permanent and after a period, we would be weary of it. The great planner would have to bring everything to a period of rest. This is the beautiful philosophy of Śaivism. Creation and Protection are not the finality. Progress will last only so long as there is perfect harmony in relationship. Then there must be a phase of involution, *samhāra*, a period of quiet for the universe to get back to love and dharma. This is the secret of progress.

XII. Recovery of faith

It was Dr. Ānanda Coomāraswāmy that pointed out that Myth, Doctrine and Social Order were logically conceived and

constructed in Hinduism. In his wonderfully perceptive and scholarly book which by its brevity does not suffer from diffuseness, "*Hinduism and Buddhism*", he says: "Vedic doctrine is neither pantheistic, nor a worship of the powers of Nature except in the sense that *Natura Naturans est Deus* and all her powers but the names of Gods acts; that Karma is not "fate" except in the orthodox sense of the character and destiny that inhere in created things themselves and rightly understood determines their vocation; that *maya* is not "illusion" but rather the material measures and means, essential to the manifestation of a quantitative and in this sense a "material world of appearances, by which we may be either enlightened or deluded according to the degree of our own maturity; that the notion of a "re-incarnation" in the popular sense of the return of the deceased individuals to rebirth on this earth represents only a misunderstanding of the doctrines of heredity, transmigration and regeneration; and that the six *darśanas* of the later Sanskrit "philosophy" are not so many mutually exclusive systems but as their name implies so many "points of view" which are no more mutually contradictory than are, let us say, botany and mathematics......The Hindu is thankful perfectly to have his own scriptures made use of by others as "extensive and probable proofs" of the truth as they also knew it. The Hindu would argue, moreover that is on their heights alone that any argument of differing cultures can be effected". Dr. Ānanda Coomāraswāmy points out that in the sense that "religion" is to be identified with "law" and distinguished from the "spirit," Hindu religion is strictly speaking an obedience and that this is so, appears clearly in the fact that a man is considered to be a Hindu in good standing, not only by what he believes but by what he does; or in other words by his 'skill' in well doing under the law. For if there is no liberation by works, it is evident that the practical part of the social order, however, faithfully fulfilled, can be no more than any other rite or that the affirmative theology be regarded as anything more than a means to an end beyond itself...... A church or society—the Hindu would make no distinction—that does not provide a way or escape from its own regimen and will not let people go, is defeating its own purpose".

Thus, Hinduism is not religion without freedom and at one stage the ritual is abandoned and the relative truths of theology denied and it believes that it is by the knowledge of good and evil alone that man could deliver himself.

XIII. Classical Hinduism's relevance to India's Development today

The social tripod on which classical Hinduism stood was (1) the village republic, (2) caste system and (3) joint family. The first and the last have disappeared. Village autonomy or what is called panchāyatrāj is sought to be revived for raising the human and economic resources of the real India which lives in the villages of the vast country. Although joint family has become impossible any more owing to economic changes during the last 100 years, family ties whether one is a Hindu or Christian or Muslim, are much stronger in India than in any Western country or even in Eastern and South-Eastern countries of Asia. Caste is unique to India only, and it is much stronger in South India than in the north. Untouchability has now been ruled out by law. Socio-political movements have been dealing heavy blows at caste as an institution for which sanctimonious religious sanction is claimed by some and pooh-poohed by the radical in Hindu society at large in view of its degradation and abuses. Classical Hinduism was also philosophic. It ontologically acknowledged the divine essence in every individual and doctrinally acknowledged the truth in every religion and did not claim its exclusiveness for the salvation of man nor believed in saviours or redeemers of sin. Classical Hinduism also acknowledged the four aims of human existence as righteousness, wealth, love and salvation. It is therefore, a mistake to think that Hinduism is a social institution or even as a practising religion has been wholly other-worldy and has as its basis in world and life negation. Its metaphysics generally and some schools of philosophic thought particularly, might look upon the world as *maya,* which does not mean illusory, but as secondary reality. Some of even the earliest schools, and most prominently the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva schools, did not contribute to that doctrine of *maya.* Philosophic Hinduism looked upon even lōkāyata (materialist) as the first stage in the ladder which finally led to the Brahman as the only Reality and so its world and life abnegation is only metaphysical.

Hinduism is not exclusively non-secular. The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics describes secularism as "movement that is intellectually ethical, negatively religious, with political and philosophical antecedents." From this criteria classical Hinduism which is sacerdotal offers co-existence to secularism. This is its peculiar virtue, and so it is a bulwark against rank Atheism. If anybody wishes to abolish religion—whether Hindu, Christian or Muslim, classical Hinduism will remain unmoved because it cannot be abolished as it seeks not to abolish anything else. If State or individual action for India's development says religion is an impediment, classical Hinduism will not come into clash. If anybody stands in the way of classical Hinduism going the farthest way for India's development, it is only those who have a vested interest in some of its features, of which caste and ritualism are the unacceptable and regarded as irrational are likely to demur as secular dominance over religion.

The State in India is not secular. This view may sound astonishing at first sight. The State is not theocratic to be sure, but the Indian Constitution acknowledges religion and gives freedom to profess, to preach and propagate religion. This right is one of the valuable fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Classical Hinduism never wanted a theocratic state for it to thrive or develop or to nurture *dharma*. Even in olden days, Hindu kingdoms were not theocratic and Hindu kings were not looked upon as the Viceregent of God or possessing Divine right. Today Nepal which is the only Hindu State in the world is not a theocratic state for its development. The depth of Indian society, says Prof. M. Ruthnaswamy, continues to be religion and the surface only gleams with the ripples and froth of secularism. In view of the economic backwardness of the people, all sections are concentrating on the promotion of the material progress of the people. To that extent Indian society is secular. The Hindu religion is not ambivalent in this respect but perfectly pragmatic. Hindu religious public opinion allows the funds of their religious institutions like temples and mutts to be diverted for War funds, Famine Relief, and other secular purposes which make no distinction between one religionist and another. Even recently it accepted

with optimism a million refugees from Bangla Desh of which a sizeable percentage are Muslims, who or their fathers, preferred to be part of Pakistan at the time of Partition. No modern religious teacher of Hinduism or the pontiffs of sectarian mutts have moulded opinion, the humanity of the religion which looks upon the problem from a human angle and not with reference to antecedent.

XIV. Hinduism in secular India

Among Hindus the influence of religion is almost total because even in the absence of orthodoxy, religion permeates every dapartment of life and social habits like marriage and eating. Among orthodox Muslims also the influence of religion is total. Among Christians it is claimed that religion is restricted to spiritual and moral life and that there is freedom in regard to marriage, eating etc. But in the sphere of individual life and in the matter of individual character and conduct all religious exercise a dominant influence. In political decisions bearing on India's development Hinduism as the religion of the majority has no retrograde or sectarian role to play. In matters of foreign policy or in the matter of right of religious practices, however, some Hindu parties have a grouse. (For example, the attitude to Pakistan and Muslim League of India; the mass conversion of tribal people to Christianity, cow-slaughter etc.) This section alone cannot claim to be the blue-blooded representative of classical Hinduism. The bulk of the Hindus adopt a policy of *laisses faire* in religion so that India's development may not be retarded. Take for example family planning, the Hindu majority has not intervened on religious grounds. Orthodox sections have not intervened in this matter as much as it has in the matter of banning cow-slaughter. All these features sufficiently allow the unfettered the secular development of the people.

In India we had no need to invent a new creed in the place of religion, as in Communist, and Fascist countries to make secularism fruitful. Religion is found to be a powerful aid to meterial progress. Secular societies became, as we know unstable in Fascist and Nazi regimes. Although Napoleon was not an

exemplary Catholic, he concluded a contract with the Pope allowing religion to be re-established in the life of France. Although Nehru was not a classical Hindu he did not carry a *jehad* against Hinduism for the sake of his messianic mission of rejuvenating India. Periyār Rāmaswāmy though a brutal opponent of superstition and priestcraft and one who railed against gods, did not aim at the abolition of religion and had no substitute for it to offer. Although some people do not take their oaths in Court and in public offices in the name of God, they dare not ask for abolition of religion. Religion has not been abolished even in Russia and a distinction is made there between the State and the Communist Party, in its attitude to God. The State there has nothing to do with religion but the Communist Party is against religions as its creed. Classical Hinduism, is not against socialistic approach for India's development, provided atheism is not preached. Classical Hinduism, which maintains a distinction between sacerdotal and secular, cannot be accused as designedly bourgeois and standing against India's socialistic development, although it is ingrained in social distinctions based on delusive spiritualism.

XV. Modern Hinduism and Social concern

Assuming that religion must actively be an ally for the material development of the mass society of India, the question remains to be answered whether classical Hinduism or any of its later developments is a help or hindrance or whether it should make way at least little by little for another religion, say Christianity which is the only active proselytising religion functioning in India at the moment. As regards Islam the theocratic State of Pakistan has no expressed or implied ambition of conversion of India to Islam by conquest but it professes to have a right to take interest in the political and cultural protection of its co-religionists in India against real or imagined oppression by the secular Government of India which it holds to be in fact a Hindu state. What is it that Christianity or Islam could do that classical Hinduism has not done for the moral and material progress of the people of this country? Hindu culture is pan-Indian, but there are no Hindu kingdoms abroad. It has no social or political influence. Even neighbouring Nepal is not bound to India by ties

of religion. This is not the case with some Christian and Buddhist countries in the world. Ceylon banks on Chinese support on the basis of her common religion, viz. Buddhism. Christian countries in Africa are not bound together by the medium of the Church. The Arab countries which are Islamic are bound more by political expediency rather than by religion alone. It is not on record that non-Hindu countries have progressed faster than India and that Hinduism is at the bottom of poverty and under-development of India, other things being equal.

There are three propositions to which an answer, yes or no, has to be given in dealing with this issue:—

1. Has not modern Hinduism the essential ingredients of the classical Hinduism so far as its social concerns are concerned?

2. Has not classical Hinduism any of the special virtues that other religions like Christianity or Islam can claim for ensuring the material and spiritual salvation of its adherents?

3. Is not Christianity or Islam in India better and more perfect than those self-same religions in other parts of this world and is this not owed to a great extent to the million of goodness of the basic culture of India.

The answer to each of these questions is obvious. It is nevertheless true that certain habits of one religion may help to generate economic growth more quickly, may develop an attitude to work more beneficial to production, may make public corruption more sinful than another religion does. It cannot be alleged that the whole moral content of classical Hinduism in the two words "*Satyam Vada Dharmam chara*" (Be truthful, Act righteously) has become less potent than the doctrines of some other ancient religion. Only in international affairs *satya* and *dharma* have become less valued today. This had led to the failure of the League of Nations and the ineffectiveness today of the United Nations. International aid for development is often tied to political strings which have for their object political domination or economic

imperialism. Ethics is the first casualty in political affairs. The principle of *Satya* and *Dharma* must be ubiquitous in its operation. That is why though India is not a first rate power or member of a power blocks it has helped in the comity of nations many underdeveloped countries to gain freedom and start on the march to progress. India is the Bhiṣma among the poor nations of the world.

XVI. Karma and Social consciousness

Some hold that the doctrine of Karma has been responsible for the inadequacy of social consciousness for development in India. It is often stated that a man's poverty and suffering or those of his neighbour are reconciled with the individual's karma and so no remedy is possible or is necessary. It might be seemingly so owing to a persisting misunderstanding of the law of Karma. It is said that the Hindu stands in dread of the inviolability of the effect of Karma and that faith in the doctrine of a loving God as manifested, for example, in the life of Jesus and especially of redemption in his death on the Cross is not available to the Hindu. It is not as if there is no belief in the mercy of a living God in Hinduism. The grace of God in Hinduism is not merely redemptive. By God keeping His grace concealed, makes a man to suffer so that his sin may be worked off to nullity by his own suffering. As there is no belief in "original sin" in Hinduism, there is no need for redemptive grace. Belief in the theory of Karma is no bar to one being charitable to his fellow beings and share his suffering, but it is argued that it minimises the strength of one's bonds with society. If the law of Karma negates the law of human love, so also the law of forgiveness may be said to negate the moral law of retribution. St. Paul's warning:—"Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" is really not the opposite to the law of Karma. But what seems to be, in my opinion, a more valid social criterion is that raised by Dr. A. G. Hogg that the Hindu law has not given attention to the complementary truth that a man's deeds has a fruit in other people's experiences also. The parables of the prodigal son, the lost sheep and the lost coin are in support of the merits or the efficacy of forgiveness or unmerited

suffering. While the Hindu says in respect of other people's suffering, "There is no problem, for there is no undeserved suffering" the Christian declaration is "There is no problem, for it is right there should be undeserved suffering." The latter concept doubtless is more elevating. But in Hinduism individual karma is not without effect for the lokakshema (world good). The whole idea underlying the *Bhagavad Gita* is that work must be self-sacrifice to transform itself for the good of the world besides for one's own. This, however, is frequently overlooked by the Hindu.

XV. Attitude to Science and Social change

Classical Hinduism has no dread of science unlike the early pagan and Christian churches had. It did not burn a Giordano Bruno or imprison Galileo because it was aware of the historic insufficiency of religion for material purposes for which freedom of human action is freely acceded. There is thus no conflict between science and religion in classical Hinduism. *Vijñāna* (emperical) and *Prajñāna* (absolute knowledge) are of the same species but the latter is more real. The one is *apara* (relative) and the other *para* (absolute). Man is enjoined constantly to seek a *parajñāna*, to arrive at the ultimate truth. So, classical Hinduism will not decry Atomic science though it will look upon its destructive use as *asuric* or *adharmic*. If Vijñāna leads to adharma, there will be divine intervention to set right it. If the *Bhagavad Gita* promise Divine intervention as *avatara* even for social disorder due to Varṇasaṅgraha, surely there will be Divine intervention for *manisha nāsa* (the destruction of mankind) by misuse of power.

It is nevertheless to be admitted the classical Hinduism or Brahminism would be allergic to any reform although it has itself lost much of its vitality long before the 9th century. Rev. Father Mariasusai Dharmamony traces this to the lack of development of the Bhakti cult in the Brahminic religion. The early Brahminic religion was cold, impassive and speculative unlike the pre-Aryan and non-Aryan elements. Nearly all the Śaivite gods (like Śiva, Muruga) are non-Aryan in origin and it developed the cult of a personal God through bhakti which made no distinction with jñāna. Father Dharmamony observes: "Brahminism is priestly,

hierarchical, aristocratic. But the bhakti cult has universal appeal. At a later period the great reformers of the Bhakti renaissance will invariably be to some extent, social reformers as well seeking to broaden out, even to suppress the restrictions of caste. If Brahminism was not congenial to the development of Bhakti and was even at times adverse to it, it was only at the very end of the upanishads that Bhakti was grudgingly injected into its religions. Weltenchaung: "Brahminism grew into Hinduism owing to its assimilation, accompanied by synchronism of the non-Brahminic religious elements of which bhakti was the chief. The bhakti movement which was deeply social, is described by Prof. B. C. Zackner "as an impassioned cry against the ossified ceremonial religion of the Brahmins and the idea of "passionlessness" they shared with the Buddhists and the Jains." So unless classical Hinduism retains its later development and does not relapse into its earliest phase but marches on inscribing "*abhyudaya*" or development on its banner it cannot work for India's development but would impede it. The social system which classical Hinduism ordained has no validity. Jawaharlal Nehru observed: "It was a closed system, allowing a certain adaptability, change and freedom in its outer framework but inevitably growing more and more exclusive and rigid. Progressively it lost its power to expand and tap new resources of talent. Powerful vested interests prevented any radical change and kept education from spreading to other classes. The old superstitions known to be such by many among the upper classes were preserved and newer ones were added to them. Not only the national economy but thought itself became stationary, traditional, rigid, inexpansive and unprogressive. The conception and practice of caste embodied a fatalistic ideal and was obviously opposed to democratic conceptions. It had its strong sense of *noblesse oblige*, (privilege entailing responsibilities) provided people kept to their hereditary stations and did not challenge the established order. India's success and achievement were on the whole confined to upper classes; those lower down in the scale had very few chances and their opportunities were strictly limited. In the context of society today the caste system and much that goes with it are wholly incompatible, reactionary,

restrictive and are barriers to progress. There can be no equality in status and opportunity within its framework, nor can there be political democracy and much less economic democracy. Between these two conceptions conflct is inherent and only one system can survive."

XVII. Need for new spurt

If the choice is between caste and democracy, it is enigmatical to which side classical Hinduism will incline, but the fact is that there are no classical Hindus today! Even enlightened heads of Mutts, apart from a few reactionaries, are willing to progress with the times so that atheism may not take its place as Brahminism has utterly failed. They would help the recovery of faith by relaxing their fundamentalism. But Hindu society will judge whether this is mere expediency or whether it springs from a strong devotion to promotion of commonweal. A more positive contribution to spiritual health or material welfare must be a necessary choice. The classical Hinduism is not to be blamed because it was one phase of the religious growth of a people whose culture and civilization had started long millenia ago and has survived through many vicissitudes while the Greek and Roman civilisations had actually come to an end long centuries back. According to Albert Schwietzer, Hinduism is still not lifting itself above Brahminism but after seating itself beside Bhagavad Gita which helped Hinduism to win its battle with Brahmin for equality of spiritual rights and harmonising its own world and life affirmation with the Brahminic world, usurps its place by reading its own doctrine with all sacred texts. But this cannot be long because of its deficiencies as a world view. Brahminism is marvellously simple, but lifeless, while Hinduism is unpolished but alive. The Brahminic formalism may persists but it must be filled with a new spirit—a world view which would be more relevant to India's predicament, of having to make the lives of 360 millions, a little more humane and a little more purposeful by making the rate of economic growth faster, by providing work for the teeming millions, by guaranteeing minimum necessaries of life, like housing water supply and at least one square meal a day and education to the young."

The future is not without hope and the new renaissance of Hinduism can be hoped to sustain all these humanistic endeavours.

XVIII. Intrusive and extrusive views

In a recent book entitled *Hinduism* and *Christianity* Dr. N. K. Devaraj, an avowed humanist, examines Hinduism and Christianity from his point of view very critically as in his view comparative religion is a descriptive necessity for reason and rational criteria in value studies and it involves the relevance and limitations of religions. He thinks that the claim and counter-claims of various revelations can ultimately be settled only with reference to man's reason and experience and that there is no conflict between reason and experience as even the transcendental must be comprehensive in terms of our experiential imagination and reason. He examines Christianity and Vaishnavism (as representative of theistic Hinduism). He is no less critical of Hinduism as of Christianity and in a final chapter which he calls Humanistic Appraisal he states as follows:—" I do not envisage an easy and secure future for such faith—centred creeds as Christianity and Vaishnavism. The only religions that seem to me to have future are such rational creeds as Buddhism and philosophic Hinduism, although the metaphysical schemes offered by them are all-inclusive and final truths. All that I claim is that the spirit underlying the method and approach of those views has greater kinship with rational and empirical temper of our age than the methods and approaches of the creeds based on prophetic teachings and revealed scriptures." C. S. Lewis also in his *Screwtape Letters* makes Screwtape tell Wormwood to keep men engaged in all those schemes of thought such as creative Evolution, scientific Humanism or Communism which fixes man's attention on the future on the very core of temporality. We want a whole race perpetually in pursuit of the rainbow and, never happy in the present yet always heaping on the altar of the future every real gift of the present. Thus two views are possible of old religions, one intrusive and the other extrusive.

Albert Schwietzer is the most perceptive critic of the dematerialised action apotheosized in the *Bhagavad Gita*. He regards this as no better than 'Fichte's concept of God as an Infinite Will to action and Man to play his part in the stage set by God. Fichte gives human activity a meaning starting from the Divine activity. In the *Gita* man plays a part in the drama from a blind sense of duty without seeking to find out its meaning. Like Buddhism it demands ethical action but it arises from one's social position, profession etc. as determined by caste or scriptures. Although the Gita inculcates Bhakti to God, it is an end in itself. It does not make love to God find expression in love to mankind. Schweitzer observes, "Because it fails to reach the idea of actual love, the ethics of the *Bhagavad Gita* is like a smoky fire from which no flame flares upward." Bhagavad Gita is sphinx-like in its ethic of duty without love. Dr. Norman Brown also observes the inconsistency in *Gita's* concepts.

XIX. Thiruvaḷḷuvar's Pragmatism

The idea of active love on the other hand is clearly emphasised in Tiruvaḷḷuvar's *Tirukkuṛal.* Schweitzer draws attention to the world of difference between the Laws of Manu in which the dominance of the Brahman spirit and world and life affirmation is just tolerated, whereas in the *Kuṛal* world and life negation is only like a distant cloud. The ethics of the *Kuṛal* is not entirely dominated by the idea of duties or non-attachment or reward. The motive for activity in the Gita is chilly while the *Kuṛal* justifies the idea of ethical activity by its beneficent results. A *Kuṛal* couplet says, "Even though one should say, There is no higher world, it is still good to give" and another says: "All property gained by industrious toil is there for good men in order they may practise well-being." The *Kuṛal* thus draws the ideal of simple ethical humanity. Dr. Schweitzer says that this ethical world and life affirmation was not present in the three B's—*Brahminism, Buddhism* and *Bhagavad Gita*. Schweitzer was probably not so much conversant with the lives and teachings of the sages Śaiva Nāyanmārs and Vaishnava Āḻwārs in Hinduism as he jumps from *Kuṛal* to Ram Mohan Roy, Vivekananada and others. The

credo of the Tamiḻ Saint, St. Appar, "*En 'kaṭan paṇi ceitu kiṭappatē*". *(My duty is to do works in love)* is a better world view of life affirmation as actions done in love of God and of His servants, contribute to world's happiness. The word "*paṇi*" has a wider connotation than *karma*. "Paṇi" means humble service, a dedicated service while "Karma" means merely action. St. Appar thinks that by such humble service, his God will sustain him *(aṭiyēnaiyum taankutal)* and not let him slip into a lower level. The twin concepts of humility and service in performing actions are the unique features of the theistic religions of Hinduism. Modern attestors of this theory of dedicated action to fellow beings are found in Rāmaliṅga Swāmigaḷ and Sri Vinoba Bhave in modern times.

Dr. A. G. Hogg considers that "Hinduism is essentially a social order cemented by a religious culture and claiming a religious sanction and authority. Nevertheless, probably by way of reaction of against the cramping of individuality by the caste system and the system of the joint family, the most typical flowers of personal religion which spring up is the seed-bed of the Hindu religions and social order over individuality. Its ways of salvation are essentially ways to the salvation of the individual soul in its solitariness. It has been remarked that from the finely spiritual prayers to be found in Hindu religious literature one note is conspicuous by its absence, the note of intercession. Hindu doctrine as a way of salvation betrays no recognition that the corporate social order needs a revolutionary transformation, no consuming interest in a universal reign of God." Dr. Hogg admits that even within Christianity revivalist preaching has tended to be too individually conceived. But Prof. Bosanquet observes that even the greatest Christian thinkers like Thomas Aquinas have not thought of Christian duty to work for a planned society. Western Christians would confess that their advocacy of social order is not of the same order as the Bolshevic since their vision is not confined to an earthly paradise. They would say they worked for a better social order because they believed in the infinite work of the individual soul whose destiny is to them not limited by

the span of earthly life. The consistent Hindu and the consistent Buddhist may agree that the importance of social order is over-emphasised as both do not look for a permanence on earth. But social order has to be striven after even at the expense of doctrine and the Hindu doctrine is flexible because it has no dogma. It is obvious that the religion of the 20th century, whether Hinduism or Christianity, has to be a religion without dogmas if it is to subserve social good and progress. If religion does not lose its rigidity, either atheism will take its place or the omnipotent State.

The whole question is whether classical Hinduism could be intrinsic to the modern ideas of progress contingent on the social and eeonomic changes or revolution. In America modernists from many faiths have banded themselves under the banner of Humanism. It is anti-classical and anti-credal and the definition of their religion is given as follows in "A Humanist Manifesto":— "Religion consists of those actions, purpose and experience which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religions. It includes labour, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained."

Even in America, this is justified as not irreligion or religious indifference but as a positive concern for certain values in democracy, freedom and science. There is no such movement in India today and so classical religion has still a chance. Dr. H. W. Schneider observes that the reorientation of the spirit of freedom with the spirit of religious commitment has become a serious problem of public morality in the 20th Century. There is nothing in the classical Hinduism which militates against the Hinduism of the 20th Century making such a commitment. In my opinion the situation is entirely hopeful. But a deep religious commitment for social justice and common good, not as an individual *dharma* but as a social doctrine as potent as a religious creed, is necessary. A view of karma based on the message of Thiruvalluvar as an instrument of social good and not for individual salvation can

best sustain India's development. The Hindu concept needs this modernisation but traditional Hinduism does not stand in its way.

XX. The summing up

The bane of Traditional Hinduism such as it is, notwithstanding its fine ethos and cultural vitality is the principle of graded inequality in social sphere which continues to this day. It has passed into the common and codified law of the land. Untouchability has been abolished by law but it persists in practice to an appreciable degree. The bastions of orthodoxy have been weakened but there is no reconstruction to answer to the needs of a more complex and mobile social order.

The requisites are (1) giving up formal beliefs as opposed to felt inner convictions (2) rejection of superstition (3) substitution of a goal of individual salvation by universal good (4) giving up obsession with the supernatural (5) substituting collective realism for ·mystical emotionalism (6) superseding conventional law by moral law (7) sharing with others the good thing of life without compulsion of law or dictates of religions (8) replacement of sacerdotalism by secularism (9) Dislinking the doctrine of Karma with man-made caste (10) abridging the polarity between priest and outcaste (11) replacing dogmatism by pragmatism.

Religion is no more merely a concern for inner life. For that, no formal religion or social institutions are necessary. Religion has to become an instrument of social action.

Traditional Hinduism is both elastic and unclear. It cannot be said that it has not sustained social progress. It might be possible to make out case both for its abandonment and retention. (The same can be said of all religions). Looking at the historical development of Traditional Hinduism, its ethos and in many-sidedness, there is no reason why those who follow it cannot make use of it to contribute to progress of Humanity. It is the men that matter—men free from narrowness corruption and selfishness but who would look upon the totality of human good as the truest Hindu Dharma.

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Thiru S. Lakshmirathan Bharati: The topic for discussion bristles with difficulty even at the start. We can have some idea about 'Social development'. 'Hinduism' does not convey any universal sense of meaning. It is not possible to get at a common understanding of what 'Hinduism' means, much less can one have any agreed definition of it. From the most primitive form of idol worship accompanied by sacrifice of human beings to the highest form of philosophic thought such as Advaita propounded by Sankara climbing up the pinnacle of metaphysical monism, a panorama of a vast variety of theories and practices are included under its deonomination. For most of the peopte 'Varnasrama dharma' is a must of Hinduism. Varna or the exclusive divisions by birth is also the adopted basis of the innumerable castes among Hindus extending even after conversion to other religions. Sankaracharyas assert that even untouchability has the sanction of Hindu Scriptures, while there are equally great Hindus who dispute the soundness of such statements. Even belief in a God is not an essential requisite and Atheists are also Hindus. So any rambling discussion of the diverse and conflicting phemomena of tradition in Hinduism in an unrelated manner will be futile and fruitless.

It appears to me that any religion or faith in a supernatural being directing the universe has no sense or relevance today for social development. One has to take advantage of the world context to spread the new philosophy of atheistic humanism which alone can be meaningful in an everchanging universe. The old religions and philosophies have all become outdated if not obsolete on account of the continuing discoveries made in molecular biology and atomic physics. The principle of undertainty has knocked out God and Fate. Neither materialistic determinism nor idealistic absolutism holds good now and the changes can no longer be defined or explained in terms of linear, monistic, dualistic, dialectic or didactic processes. The distinction between organic and the inorganic life and matter, soul and body, the real and the non-real (Maya or Illusion) are erased.

A continuous search in all humility for a 'dynamic equilibrium' in a multiple of interacting variables is alone what

rationalism raising from its ashes, as it were, can promise to the afflicted mankind, which has yet some distance to travel before it achieves the fulfilment of genuine humanity.

To quote Santayana, "But the Superiority of the rational soul lies in another direction—such is the attitude of experimental living and life is at bottom always an experiment. If we hug existence, let us hut it as it is and not its false image; let us set the value of life in the wind that vivifies it, the exhilaration, the terror of willing bravely—only the Joy of winning something that is seen to be thrown away."

Thiru C. N. Singaravelu: The learned lecturer, Thiru N. Murugesa Mudaliar referred to Bhagvad Gita and said that caste system has been upheld in the Gita and that when Arjuna wanted to give up fighting and pursue the path of contemplation (jñāna yoga) Lord Krṣṇa was unfair to ask him to wait for the next birth to pursue this course and to be content with karma yoga in this birth.

I think Bhagavad Gita only wanted people to pursue their own avocations perfectly and not bungle with others' duties. If Arjuna wanted to pursue the life of contemplation he should have made up his mind long before the war was declared. Lord Krṣṇa was right in asking Arjuna to do his duty as a Kshatria (warrior) having come to the battlefield.

I don't think caste system has any religious sanction. At any rate, so far Tamiḻ religious tradition goes, caste system has been condemned by ethical as well as religious books. Thirukkuṛal unequivocally says :—

> *பிறப்பொக்கும் எல்லா உயிர்க்கும், சிறப்பொவ்வா*
> *செய்தொழில் வேற்றுமையான்*
>
> "All are born equal. But their merit
> differs by their avocations."

Thirunāvukkarasar, one of four great Samayāchāryas of Śaivism exclaims in one place "what are you going to do with your castes and ancestral purity"[1] (கோத்திரமும், குலமும் கொண்டு

1. *Thirumurai* 5.60.3 (திருமாற்பேறு).

என் செய்வீர்). Religion is the solvent by which all caste and other distinctions are dissolved. The same saint says[1] "Even the lepers and the outcastes who eat beef are my deities if they are devotees of Lord Siva." Any number of passages can be quoted to prove that caste system has not been approved by the Śaivite or the Vaishnavite religious works in Tamiḻ.

Why there is the caste system being followed even now? First of all, at present in view of the various concessions given by the Government to the backward classes it is advantageous to keep the identity of one's caste, especially if he belongs to the backward community. Secondly a community is only an extension of the circle of family and relatives and for the purpose of distributing one's favours etc. a community is a convenient unit. Egotism and self-interests are the basis for the preservation of caste. Religion does not stand in the way of the abolition of the caste system.

I think religion does not stand in the way and has nothing to do with the economic or social development of a country. Every religion has a bell, book and candle. That is each religion has a philosophy and rituals. It has an essential as well as a non-essential part. That which is essential is not capable of any change. The non-essential ritualistic part is and should be capable of change in accordance with the social and economic changes in society. Some of the rituals lose their significance and stick on only in form. They are generally innocuous even if they lose their significance.

Thiru C. Ekambaram: A question has been raised if Religion or Hinduism has to improve social and economic development. The answer should be an emphatic "Yes". True, Religion should improve all aspects of life, improve one's personality, one's economic aspirations, social development, environment, spiritual development, happiness and peace. If religion or Traditional Hinduism as practised has not produced such good effects it only shows that we have not been practising True Religion.

1. *Thirumurai* 6.95.10 (பொது. தனித்திருத்தாண்டகம்).

For example the caste system, which first started on functional basis on the qualities of individuals degenerated into one on hereditary basis. The world is a play of the three Gunas, Satwic, Rajasic, and Thamasic, each having its own characteristic. Every one has all the three gunas in different proportions. One's caste can be said to change according to the qualities one exhibits. No two children are the same though born of the same parents. Within the same family there may be children of brahmin, kshatrya, vysya, and sudra qualities. Can there be a greater example than Dr. Ambedkar, who shed the greatest light and intelligence though dubbed as belonging to scheduled caste, and was the main architect in producing a constitution for India. The practice of untouchability is the greatest blot in our social system. The caste system based on birth and rigidity has created divisions and dissensions in society, produced an oligarchical society, stifled social development, weakened the country politically, and even spiritually as the spread of knowledge also became short circuited.

All these have been due to the distorted practice in the name of religion, and there is no real sanction in the scriptures.

The knowledge and understanding is delicate. With a view to emphasize that we should lead a life of detachment, there is a religious preaching that world is an illusion. Such and kindred philosophy has the effect of leading to neglect of economic development, and also a spirit of escapism, and recluse way of life. Material development is also necessary and is not antagonistic to spiritual development.

Material development alone should not be the objective. Conditions in the west are nothing satisfactory inspite of all their material advancement and affluence. In the most advanced countries of the west like Sweden life is beset with so much tension and frustration that suicide rate is the highest in the world, and more than 50% of the population are mentally sick resulting in opening of mental hospitals everywhere. They have also not been practising true religion and have been lacking in inner peace and true happiness. At least with all our poverty we can be said to be having greater peace of mind.

Possibly all the distorted practice of religion has provoked our rationalist friend (*Mr. Bharathi*) to dismiss God as a superstition and to make a plea to be reasonable and rational in our mind. He also quoted Shri J. Krishnamoorthi for his support to bury all the past.

Yes, let us be really reasonable, rational and intelligent and if we are so, we cannot fail to notice the great play of a Supremely Intelligent Force, throughout the universe. True Religion consists in our daily contacting that Supremely Intelligent Force by constant remembrance, Meditation or Dhyana, imbibing those qualities and living a life of greater intelligence, awareness and consciousness, leading to dynamic activity, whereby every action of us will be inspired by efficiency, clarity of thought, correct judgement and action with overflowing love, breaking away the prejudices and narrow boundaries. As Shri J. Krishnamoorthy says we have to be acting in the living present without memories of the past with full awareness. Saint Vaḷḷalār has also said we have to be always alert and awake and lead a life of full consiciousness. All our ills are due to not living the True Religion. Traditional Hinduism divested of its excrescences, and practice of True Religion will result in inner peace and happiness, and also social and economic development.

Thiru G. M. Muthuswamy Pillai: It has been pointed out by the learned all over the world that just as our bodies require nourishment in the form of food and other materials for sustenances, our souls are in need of spiritual experiences for their salvation. It was William Couper who sang:

"Religion! what a treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word
More precious than silver and gold
Or all that this world can afford."

But Socialists have been proclaiming that "religion is a convenient device invented by the well-todo to keep the poor in poverty, the illiterate in ignorance, the sinful in degradation and the masses

content with their servility." So far as Hinduism is concerned, though eminent scholars like Scophenhauer, Maxmuller, Macdonell, Victor Cousin and Frederic Schelegal have paid tributes to Vēdas and particularly the upanishads, the latter part of Vēdas, we are not wanting in critics decrying Hinduism. They "quote from the scriptures, inhuman or immoral practices like Sati and slavery, untouchability and unapproachability, enforced widowhood and sanctified prostitution, self torture and sacrifices of living beings."[1] In this context, Mr. D. S. Sarma points out the divine truths of religion come to us through human channels and hence we have to distinguish carefully between the husk and the kernel of religion, between what is temporary and eternal, between what is local and universe. The customs and habits of the age, the scientific ideas of the time and the particular social order of the day form the perishable part of the scripture. We do injustice to a scripture when we cling to the perishable part of it and ignore the imperishable part."[2] It will be interesting to note the factors which contributed to the elimination of the "perishable part". The Upanishads themselves questioned the utility of the several rites prescribed by the earlier part of Vēdas. The Śaiva saints of the Śaivite sect and the Āḻwārs of the Vaishnavite sect coming within the purview of Hinduism also did their bit in this direction. Saint Thirugnānasambandar, the first of the four Saiva Acharyas, though of Vēdic Brahmanical descent chose to pick up as his long companion, Thiruneelakanṭa Yāḻpāṇar, a devotee belonging to depressed class. Saint Thirunāvukkarasar, the second Śaiva Saint pointed out those who study scriptures will not by means of such a study alone realise godhead unless they experience that it is God who should be object of love and veneration.[3] He also condemned rites devoid of intense love towards the Lord.' He

1. *What is Hinduism*—D. S. Sarma 2od Edition, p. 175.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

3. வேத மோதிலென் வேள்விகள் செய்யிலென்
நீதி நூல்பல நித்தல் பயிற்றிலென்
ஓதி யங்கமொ ராறு முணரிலென்
ஈசனை யுள்கு வார்க்கன்றி யில்லையே.
திருநாவுக்கரசர். பாவநாசத்திருக்குறுந்தொகை. 4.

has also cast aspersions on caste distinctions.[1] Among the twelve Āḻvārs, Thirupāṇāḻwār happens to be a Harijan. Both among the 63 Śaiva devotees and twelve Āḻwārs there are devotees belonging to different castes. Some of them are women. It will be seen that Śaivism and Vaishnavism have been against caste distinctions prevalent then.

2. But unless the authority of Government lays its firm hand on any matter, universal application of any theory cannot be ensured. Hence scholars and Jurists really interested in reforming the Hindu Law were insisting on the eradication of social evils in this direction. Mr. K. Subramania Pillai, an eminent Tamiḻ scholar and a legal expert stressed the need for repeal and amendment of the existing laws and for enactment of fresh legislation.[2] It will be relevant to quote the opinion of an author of ancient law. Thus it is stated that "Sir Henry Maine, the author of ancient law and some more contemporaries expressed with smug uncharitableness that the Smrithi law (Hindu law) in great part was merely the idealistic picture......It was suggested by an eminent English author that the Hindu law was a mere phantom of the brain imagined by Sanskritists without law and lawyers without Sanskrit."[3] As pointed out by Mr. Subramania Pillai the omission on the part of the British when they began to administer this country in the latter part of the 18th century adopted the averments made by Sanskrit pandits and codified them as a law applicable to all.[4] Hence the codifications of the Hindu law was debated for nearly a century by law reformers and social workers and much opposition mainly based on sentiments to the ancient antiquity had to be faced. There was a process of series of Acts enacted for purpose of elimination of several inequalities. On the

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1. சாத்தி ரம்பல பேசுஞ் சழக்கர்காள்
கோத்தி ரமுங்கு லமுங்கொண் டென்செய்வீர்
பாத்தி ரஞ்சிவ மென்று பணிதிரேல்
மாத்தி ரைக்கு ளருளுமாற் பேறரே.
திருநாவுக்கரசர். திருமாற்பேறு குறுந்தொகை. 3.

2. கா சுப்பிரமணிய பிள்ளை. தமிழர் சமயம். பக்கங்கள் 148-153.

3. *Principles of Hindu Law*. Sundarlal T. Desai. 13th Edition (1970)

4. கா. சுப்பிரமணிய பிள்ளை. தமிழர் சமயம். பக்கம். 148.

recommendation of the Hindu Law Committee known as Sir Benegal Narasinga Rau Committee constituted in the year 1941, the Hindu Marriage Act, the Hindu Succession Act, Minority and Guardianship Act, the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act came into effect to meet the situation. We have now Hinduism refined by the later day Śaivism and Vaishnavism and modified by a series of legislations undertaken by the Government.

3. The next aspect to be considered is how far in the age of Science and democracy the religions, particularly Hinduism can contribute to the national or international development.

This is the age of comparative study of different languages of the world. Several scholars in the western countries have taken laborious pains to study the Vēdas and the Upanishads in particular and evince a lively interest in matters Indian. Mention should be made in this connection, the tremendous efforts of Max Muller in publishing the fifty volumes of the Scriptures in the series "Sacred Books of the East". The four schools of philosophy emanating from Hinduism will be of special interest to the different philosophers of the world. Thus the Vedanta philosophy of Sankara to the effect "All things are not as they appear to be but are Brahmam" dictates that we are all included in "all things" which means that we are Brahmam. In this way there is no individuality, no attachment and no desire. There is thus freedom from the shakles of birth and death. Dwaita, founded by Madhva distinguishes souls from God in a distinct manner. God and souls are separate. Vishistadwaita advocated by Ramanujacharia holds the theory that souls are parts of God, the All-pervading Entity. Śaiva Siddhānta holds God as omnipotent, omni-present, eternal, perfect and full of love. He is independent, at the same time separate and also resides with the souls.[1] In Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy there are two aspects, Anda linga and Pinḍa liṅga, which are based on Āgamic principles. Anda liṅga is based on a universal conception.[2]

1. "உலகெலா மாகி வேருய் உடனுமாய்". சிவஞான சித்தியார்.

2. தரையுற்ற சத்தி தனிலிங்கம் விண்ணும்
திரைபொரு நீரது மஞ்சன சாலை
வரைதவழ் மஞ்சுநீர் வானுடு மாலை
கரையற்ற நந்தி கலையுந்திக் காமே. திருமந்திரம். 1725.

According to this aspect, the entire universe, with all the mountains, rivers, meadows etc. from the lower part of the Aṇḍa liṅga while other occupies the upper part. The worshippers of Lord Śiva in this form of Śivaliṅga consider themselves as particles of that great universe which is called Aṇḍam (அண்டம்). All worshippers thus realise themselves as brethren. There is no scope for one hating the other. Pindam (பிண்டம்) is the human body. The human body is conceived as Sivalinga with the name of Piṇḍa liṅga.[1] When Aṇḍa liṅga and Piṇḍa liṅga are taken together there is the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. These points are mentioned in Thirumoolar's Thirumantiram.

4. In examining the question of the contribution of Hinduism to social development, we must bear in mind the fact that when the Aryans came to India, the Dravidians were there already. Mr. Sudhakar Chattopadyaya refers to J. Marshall's statement that Phallus was worshipped in the Mohenjodaro area as Phallus worship later on became part of Hinduism of course with an elevated philosophy in the background. The same author has found that "the common Aryan imbibed many traits of the Harappans, mainly of Dravidians, and also of the proto Austroloids though they maintained outwardly the traditions of the Aryan cultures."[2] He continues "And in this fusion lay the future germ of Hinduism. From this Harappan-Dravidian sources came the tradition of yoga, Śiva pāsupatha cult with liṅga worship, the cult of Mother Goddess, the worship of trees and animals as well as the worship or Pūja with water, leaves, flowers etc. These cults were again augmented later on from other ethnic cultures. If the statement in Bhagavad Gita that 'any person who offers with devotion, flowers etc., that offer is accepted by God', has at its bottom a Dravidian background then it must be held that Bhakti,

1. மானுட ராக்கை வடிவு சிவலிங்கம்
மானுட ராக்கை வடிவு சிதம்பரம்
மானுட ராக்கை வடிவு சதாசிவம்
மானுட ராக்கை வடிவு திருக்கூத்தே. திருமந்திரம். 1726.

2. *The evolution of Hindu sects up to Sankaracharya.* Sudhakar Chattopaddyaya.

the pivot of Hindu sectarianism came from Dravidian sources."[1] This hypothetical statement has to be examined with reference to the materials available. The worship of God Śiva, in the form of Śivaliṅga with flowers, leaves etc. is prescribed in Āgamas. It is laid down that the Śivaliṅga should always be with flowers on its head. The Śaiva Saints, Thirugñānasambandar and Thirunāvukkarasu Nāyanār have in several places referred to the worship of God Śiva with flowers and water.[2] It is evident that these saints who have closely followed the Āgamic principles referred to this practice in their hymns. Besides, as stated by Mr. K. A. Neelakanta Sastri the temple worship was not part of the original Vēdic religion.[3] Hence it has to be accepted that cult of worship or pūja with flowers and leaves was derived from Dravidian sources.

5. The four cardinal aims of life according to the Dravidian way of life are அறம், பொருள், இன்பம், வீடு i.e. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The Tamiḻ word அறம் is a very comprehensive one which includes every virtue, ideal and in short everything that is best. According to Sri. C. Rajagopalacharyar, there is no word in the English language which can bring out all the aspects which the Tamiḻ word அறம் indicates but there is an equivalent term in Sanskrit and that word is தர்மம் (Dharma).[4] Pure chaste life prior to marriage, family life with an affectionate and chaste wife, begetting honest, intelligent and obedient children, earning a livelihood by honest means, spending a proportionate

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1. *The evolution of Hindu sects up to Sankaracharya.* Sudhakar Chattopaddyaya.
2. "நறைமலி தருமள ரொடுமுகை நகுமலர் புகைமிகு வளரொளி
 நிறைபுனல் கொடுதனை நினைவொடு நியதமும் வழிபடும் அடியவர்'
 திருஞானசம்பந்தர். 1.21.4.

 "சலம்பூவொடு தூபம் மறந்தறியேன்"–திருநாவுக்கரசு நாயனார். 4.1.4
 "மாதர் பிறைக்கண்ணி யானை மலையான் மகளொடும் பாடிப்
 போதொடு நீர்சுமந் தேத்திப் புகுவார வர்பின் புகுவேன்"
 திருநாவுக்கரசர். 4.3.1

 "கற்றுக் கொள்வன வாயுள நாவுள
 இட்டுக் கொள்வன பூவுள நீருள." திருநாவுக்கரசர். 5.91.6
3. *A History of South India.* K. A. Neelakanta Sastri. p. 64.
4. C. R.'s Translation. page 2.

share of the income on various kinds of charities for the welfare of the down-trodden and poor come within the ambit of (தர்மம்) Dharma. A robust constitution has to be built up even in the early years treating the human body as the abode of God as indicated by Śaint Tirumoolar.[1] We may compare this aspect with what Lord Tennyson has referred of Sir Galahad as proclaiming "I have got the strength of ten because my heart is pure." Marriage is not intended for a mere satisfaction of sexual desires but meant for begetting children for posterity. The famous Tamil Poetess Avvaiyār has in one of her songs in Nalvazhi (நல்வழி) has laid down the principle that one should live a useful life within thirty years of his age and thereon give up his three desires viz. the desires for landed property, money and sexual pleasure.[2] Probably taking into account the practice of early marriage, this period has been prescribed. Besides there has been the practice with the elders in the Hindu society to bless the husband and wife at the time of their marriage with a wish that they should be awarded with sixteen acquisitions. These acquisitions are not sixteen children but sixteen acquisitions such as education' health etc. These acquisitions are detailed in a poem.[3] In this context it will be appropriate if the opinion expressed by Dr. S. Chandrasekhar is indicated in his own words: "It is obvious that if every Hindu followed scrupulously the 'Do's and the 'Don'ts'

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1. "உடம்பினை முன்னம் இழுக்கென்றி ருந்தேன்
உடம்பினுக் குள்ளே யுறுபொருள் கண்டேன்
உடம்புளே உத்தமன் கோயில் கொண்டான் என்று
உடம்பினை யானிருந்து ஓம்புகின் றேனே" —திருமந்திரம். 725.

2. முப்பதாம் ஆண்டளவில் மூன்றற் றொரு பொருளைத்
தப்பாமல் தன்னுட் பெறுனுயின்—செப்பும்
கலையளவே யாகுமாம் காரிகையார் தங்கள்
முலையளவே யாகுமாம் மூப்பு. —ஔவையார். நல்வழி. 39.

3. துதிவாணி[1] வீரம்[2] விசயம்[3] சந்தானம்[4] துணிவு[5] தனம்[6] மதி[7]
தானியம்[8] சவுபாக்கியம்[9] போகம்[10] அறிவு[11] அழகு[12] புதிதாம்
பெருமை[13] அறம்[14] குலம்[15] நோயக[illegible] மூண்வயது[16] பதினாறு
பேறும் தருவாய் மதுரைப் பராபரனே.
—நந்தியம்பெருமான் வேண்டுகோள்

of Hinduism, there will be no population problem in India. We are neither strict Hindus nor are we modernised."[1] Hinduism does not want that man should escape from his duties. He can live a complete life with the Grace of God. These aspects are indicated by Śaint Thirugñānasambandar and Śaints Mānickavāśagar and Thirunāvukkarasu Nāyanār. Such a venerable life will certainly lead to salvation.[2] As instructed by Śaint Aruṇagirināthar one need not take to ascetism but it is enough if one resorts to intense devotion to Lord Muruga even during domestic life[3]

6. As regards the social service that should be rendered by every one, the theory of Karma which has been given due importance in the philosophy Hinduism is the guiding factor. This theory implies that every action has an effect and this effect has to be experienced by the individual concerned. Buddhism does not accept the existence of God. While Christianity and Islam accept the existence of God, these religions do not uphold the theory of karma. On the other hand Śaivism defines the karma theory as four fold, the man responsible for the deed, the deed itself, the effects of the deed and God. It is God who directs that the effects of the past actions should be experienced in a specified manner.[4] Hence there is the constant alertness on the

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1. *Population and Planned Parenthood in India*—Dr. S. Chandrasekhar.

2 மண்ணில் நல்லவண்ணம் வாழலாம் வைகலும்
எண்ணில் நல்லகதிக்கு யாதுமோர் குறைவிலை
திருஞானசம்பந்தர். III. திருக்கழுமலம். 1.

"என்னால் அறியாப்பதம்"—மாணிக்கவாசகர்.
பிரிவிலா அடியார்க்கென்றும் வாராதசெல்வம் வருவிப்பானை.
திருநாவுக்கரசர்.

3. "கண்டுண்ட சொல்லியர் மெல்லியர் காமக் கலவிக்கள்ளை
மொண்டுண் டயர்கினும் வேல்மறவேன் —கந்தரலங்காரம். 73.

4. செய்வினையும் செய்வானும் அதன்பயனும் சேர்ப்பானும்
மெய்வகையால் நான்காகும் விதித்தபொருள் எனக்கொண்டே
இவ்வியல்பு சைவநெறி அல்லவற்றுக் கில்லையென
உய்வகையால் பொருள் சிவன்என்று அருளாலே
[உணர்ந்தறிந்தார்.
— சாக்கிய நாயனார் புராணம். 5.

part of the individual to think of God as a witness to all of his actions and desire to do noble deeds. This is evident from one of the songs of Kumara Gurupara Swamigal included in *Neethi Neri Vilakkam,*[1] Even then, in order to ensure that one need not be forced to take another birth to enjoy the effect of good deeds, all the noble deeds are dedicated to God even at the outset.

A pertinent question may be raised about the need for worshipping God, when one has to experience the effect of past actions according to the theory of karma. This doubt is cleared by Saint Thirunāvukkarasu Nāyanār. He says that the worship of God and His eventual Grace will lessen the gravity of the effect or danger.[2] Who can forget that Markandeya destined to die at the age of sixteen was blessed with everlasting life by the Lord, as a result of his intense devotion to the Lord? The warning given by Hinduism to the effect that those who do not help the poor, when they are capable of doing it, will suffer in the terrible hell and those who do not help the poor[3] and water the plants[4] at the same time worshipping God will stand the ordeal of suffering in hell will indicate that apart from humanity, plant life should also be res-

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1. வஞ்சித் தொழுகும் மதியிலிகாள் யாவரையும்
வஞ்சித்தே மென்று மகிழன்மின் — வஞ்சித்த
எங்கு முளனொருவன் காணுங்கொ லென்றஞ்சி
அங்கங் குலைவது அறிவு. குமரகுருபரர். நீதிநெறி விளக்கம். 93.

2. வெம்பவரு கிற்பதன்று கூற்றம் நம்மேல்
[வெய்யவினைப் பகையும் பைய நையும்
—திருநாவுக்கரசர். 6.95. பொது. 2.

3. இரப்பவர்க் கீய வைத்தார் ஈபவர்க் கருளும் வைத்தார்
கரப்பவர் தங்கட் கெல்லாங் கடுநர கங்கள் வைத்தார்
பரப்புநீர்க் கங்கை தன்னைப் படர்சடைப் பாகம் வைத்தார்
அரக்கனுக் கருளும் வைத்தார் ஐயன் ஐயாறனாரே
திருநாவுக்கரசர். 4.38. திருநேரிசை. 10.

4. பரவப் படுவான் பரமனை ஏத்தார்
இரவலர்க் கீதலை யாயினும் ஈயார்
கரகத்தால் நீராட்டிக் காவை வளர்க்கார்
நரகத்தில் நிற்றிரோ நாள்எஞ்சி னீரே —திருமந்திரம். 264.

pected, according to Hindu faith. It will be seen that Hinduism has not lagged behind in affording scope for social service. Sir Radhakrishnan has rightly pointed out that Max Muller overshot the mark when he said that "no other religion excepting perhaps early Buddhism and Christianity would have favoured the impartial comparison of the principal religions of the world and that Christianity is the religion of humanity."[1] Hinduism prays for the prosperity of all. Who can miss the common prayer of Hindus on every happy occasion? viz, Let Anthaṇars, Dēvas, cows prosper. Let there be onset of rain. Let the king's administration be beneficial. All evils should sink. The name of Hara (Siva) should surround the entire universe. The world should be relieved of its sufferings.

> Svasthi: prajāpya: Paripālayantham
> Nyāyyena Markena Mahim Mahīsa
> Gho Brammanēpya: Subhamasthu Nithyam
> Roka: Samastha Sukino Bhavanthu.

The same prayer is reflected in the hymn of Thirugñānasambandar. Viz.

> "வாழ்க அந்தணர் வானவர் ஆனினம்
> வீழ்க தண்புனல் வேந்தனும் ஓங்குக
> ஆழ்க தீயதெல் லாம்அரன் நாமமே
> சூழ்க வையக முந்துயர் தீர்கவே"
>
> —திருஞானசம்பந்தர் III. பொது. திருப்பாசுரம். 1.

7. Mr. D. S. Sarma has clearly stated that the Vedic rites and the Agamic rites which have thus the same end in view show in unmistakable manner the confluence in Hinduism of the two great streams of culture, the Aryan and Dravidian and that it should not be forgotten that Hinduism is much Dravidian as Aryan.[2] But as stated by Mr. J. M. Nallaswami Pillai, the Āgamas and the Śaiva Siddhānta philosophy have not received as much publicity as they deserve compared to Vēdas and Saṅkar's philosophy of Advaita

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1. *East and West in Religion*—Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, pp. 32–33, Third Impression, 1954.

2. *What is Hinduism*—D. S. Sarma, 2nd Edition, 1941, p. 50.

Vēdānta.[1] The result is that the teachings of the Śaiva Saints and Alwars insisting on humanitarian way of life have not been brought to the notice of wider circle. Saint Rāmaliṅga Swamigal of the last century, apart from his teachings for propagating humanitarianism he established an institution at Vadalur in South Arcot District for feeding the hunger stricken people irrespective of caste, sect or religion. He has appealed to the "well placed" to look after the weak and poor and has condemned selfishness and miserly conduct. In his Tamiḻ prose work on Humanitarian way of life (ஜீவகாருண்ய ஒழுக்கம்) he has condemned the habit of spending huge sums of money on decoration of pandals, several marriage ceremonies, dance and music performances, processions, sumptuous dinner with a variety of dishes etc. and has suggested that the money spent on such items can be minimised and it can as well be spent with advantage for helping the poor,

In conclusion I wish to invite attention to the statement adopted at the All India Inter Religious Dialogue on Eradication of Under Development held at Bangalore in 1972. The delegates hailing from different faiths concluded that in spite of national endeavour to liberate all men from poverty and social inequality, there is poverty and also exploitation at its lowest level widening the already narrow gap between the rich and poor and that temples, mosques, churches etc. should shed their static outlook and get actively involved in the liberation of all men.[2] If this suggestion is to materialise, strenuous efforts should be made not only by temples etc. but also the enlightened public and the Government. This subject assumes great importance in modern times when the world is faced with the over all shortage of food and the utter frustration of the poorer sections of the society.

The Chairman in his concluding remarks thanked the Leader for his comprehensive survey of development of Hindu Society and the other speakers for taking part in the Seminar.

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1. *Śaiva Siddhānta*—Vol. 5, Nos. 3 & 4, p. 190.
2. *Śaiva Siddhānta*—Vol. 7, Nos. 1 & 2, pp. 34-35.

BOOK REVIEW

The Musical Heritage of Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar: Edited by T. S. Parthasarathy, Indian Musicological Society, Bombay and Baroda, 1976, 69 pp., Rs. 10/-.

This book contains eleven articles on different aspects of Muthuswami Dikshitar's compositions and authentic information regarding his life. It is a glowing tribute to Muthuswami Dikshitar on the occasion of his Birth Bi-centenary (1775-1835) celebrations. Among these eleven articles, three give his biography and of his family. The two articles "A short biography of Muthuswami Dikshitar" and "The Contemporaries and disciples of Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar", by Mr. T. S. Parthasarathy and another by Mr. T. S. Ramakrishnan on "Dikshitar's family and Karnāṭaka Music" are very interesting. The other eight articles relate about Muthuswami Dikshitar's soul-stirring music and his excellent Sahithya set up. "A Comparative study of Muthuswami Dikshitar with Thyāgarāja and Syāma Sastri" by Mrs. Vidyasankar, "The Contribution of Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar to the wealth of Karanāṭaka music" by Dr. S. Sita, "Muthuswami Dikshitar's Compositions in Desīya rāgas" by Mr. B. V. K. Sasthri, "The many facets of Muthuswami Dikshitar" by Dr. S. Ramanathan and "Literary excellence in Muthuswami Dikshitar's compositions" by Miss. S. A. Durga and "The Nagaswaram tradition systematised by Ramaswami Dikshitar" give a comprehensive study, which is very informative.

From the articles which deal with the life of Dikshitar, we find that he belonged to an illustrious family of Sanskrit and Sangeetha scholars and he had mastered Sanskrit and Telugu besides śāstras and music under great yogins. He became an immortal and divine composer through the blessings of Lord Muruga. His contemporaries were also great men and his disciples included vocalists, Veena players, Mrudangam vidwans, Nagaswaram artists, Dance master and Danseuses.

A comparative study with the trinities is very interesting Regarding the use of 72 melas by Dikshitar, a critical analysis has been made by the writers. The style of adopting the North Indian rāgās into Dikshitar's composition has been explained vividly. His masterliness in sāhitya also is brought out by some writers. The last article (11th) entitled "Select Compositions of Muthuswami Dikshitar with an English translation" (65-69 p.) appears to be a reproduction from the book "Muthuswami Dikshitar" by Mr. T. L. Venkatarama Iyer published by the National Book Trust of India under the National Biography Series, 1968. It would have been better if this reproduction of the above book-page No. 84-95, had been acknowledged.

On the whole this book is very valuable and useful for musicologists, musicians, students and lovers of music. The articles have been compiled and edited by Mr. T. S. Parthasarathy and published in the Journal of the Indian Musicological Society, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1975 which is a special issue on the occasion of the birth Bi-centenary of Muthuswami Dikshitar.

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